This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

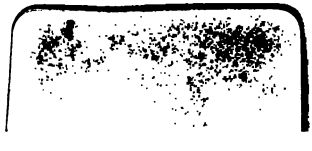
+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

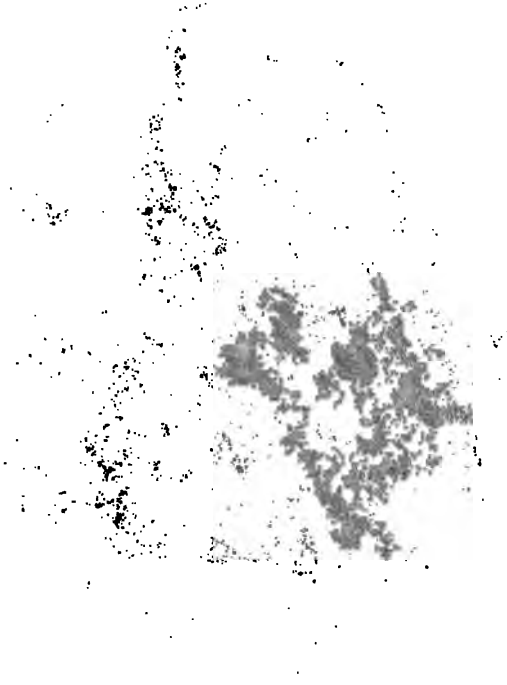
600080227P



FRONTISPIECE.

CHARLES MACKAY,

vol. . Illustrations by John Gilbert.



THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF

CHARLES MACKAY,

INCLUDING

"Legends of the Isles;" "Ballads and Lyrical Poems;" "Voices from the Mountains;" "Voices from the Crowd," and "Town Lyrics."

With Illustrations by John Gilbert.

LONDON:
G. ROUTLEDGE & CO. FARRINGDON STREET;
NEW YORK: 18, BEEKMAN STREET.
1857.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THIS Collection includes the "Legends of the Isles," illustrative of the romantic scenery and history of the Hebrides, and the adjoining mainland of Scotland, originally published at Edinburgh in the year 1845; the "Ballads and Lyrical Poems," issued in the same year; three smaller volumes, published in London at intervals from 1846 to 1849, under the titles of "Voices from the Mountains," "Voices from the Crowd," and "Town Lyrics." The Author has revised and corrected these volumes for the present edition, and redistributed under these several headings, the several poems originally published. Some pieces have been omitted which either seemed to be of temporary interest, or to be otherwise unsuited for republication; and others have been added from the sources where they were first published.

CONTENTS.

Legends of the Isles and Highland Gatherings.

	Page		Page
The Highland Ramble	1	The Kelpie of Corryvreckan	63
The Sea-King's Burial	11	The Shoal of Whales	73
The Dance of Ballochroy ..	20	The Witch of Skerrievore ..	80
St. Columba; or, the Counting of the Isles	33	The Burn of Aberiachan ..	84
The "Dream," by Beauly, Rosshire	41	The Wraith of Garry Water	88
The Invasion of the Norsemen	45	The King's Son	95
The Eve of Flodden	57	The Lady of Duart's Vengeance	104
Lord Nithsdale's Dream in the Tower of London	68	The Bridge of Glen Aray ..	109
		The Planting of the Acorns	115
		The Fall of Foyers	119
		Foyers before the Fall	120

Ballads and Lyrical Poems.

The Old and the New	1	A Candid Wooing	26
The Coming Time	13	The Voice of the Time	27
Tubal Cain	14	The Cry of the People—1845	30
The Founding of the Bell ..	16	A Lover's Logic	34
Life's Companions	20	Real and Ideal.....	35
Castles in the Air	23	Head and Heart.....	44

	Page
Little Fools and Great Ones	47
Lost and Won	49
The Death of Pan	52
Love Aweary of the World	55
The Lover's Second Thoughts on World-Weariness	57
The Drop of Water	59
The Dionysia, or Festivals of Bacchus	65
Young Genius	69
The Vision of Danton	75
Good-Night	79
Good-Morrow	80
A Song after a Toast	81
My Playfellow	82
Love in Hate	84
Lady Jane	86
The Praise of Women	89
Serenity	90
The Building of the House	91
The History of a Pair of Eyes	95
Ninette	99
The Quarrel	101
The Bridge	104
The Two Nightingales	105
The Wanderers by the Sea	109
A Traveller's Tale	113

Voices from the Mountains.

Mountain Streams	1
Melodies and Mysteries	4
The Man in the Dead Sea	6
The Follower	15
We are Wiser than we Know	20
The Child and the Mourners	22
The Water Tarantella	25
The Earth and the Stars	30
The Young Earth	32
The Golden Madness	37
The Out-Comer and the In-Goer	41
The Drop of Ambrosia	46
Now	49
The Vision of Mockery	52
The King and the Nightingales	61
Evermore—Nevermore	65
The True Companion	67
Welcome Back	68
A Lover's Fancies	70
The Nine Bathers	71
Two Mysteries	77
The Confession of Ahasuerus	78
A Reverie in the Grass	88
Love or Wisdom	92
Follow your Leader	95
The Death Banquet of the Girondins	98

Voices from the Crowd and Town Lyrics.

	Page
The Watcher on the Tower..	1
Clear the Way.....	4
The Good Time coming....	6
The Wants of the People ..	9
The Three Preachers	11
Old Opinions	14
Daily Work.....	17
An Emigrant's Blessing....	19
Railways	21
The Fermentation	23
The Poor Man's Sunday Walk	26
A Welcome to Louis Philippe	29
The Dream of the Reveller..	32
The Poet and the Political Economist	36
To a Friend afraid of Critics	40
British Freedom.....	44
The Dying Mother.....	46
Freedom and Law	49
To Impatient Genius	54
The Golden City.....	56
The Deposition of King Clog	60
Street Companions.....	64
The Light in the Window..	67
Mary and Lady Mary.....	71
Above and Below	75
John Littlejohn	77
The Poor Man's Bird.....	80
Unknown Romances	82
The Floating Straw	84
A Question Answered	86
What might be Done.....	88
The Mowers	90
Said I to Myself, said I....	94
An Appeal to Paris	98
Thoughts	101
Cleon and I.....	102
The Phantoms of St. Sepulchre	104
The Little Moles.....	110
Let us alone.....	113
Eternal Justice	116

Legends of the Isles, &c.

PROLOGUE.

THE HIGHLAND RAMBLE.

"We three are young: we have a month to spare;
Money enough; and, whistling off our care,
We can forsake the turmoil of the town,
And tread the wilds—making our faces brown
With sunshine, on the peaks of some high Ben.
Let us away,—three glad, unburden'd men—
And trace some mountain-torrent to its source,
'Mid fern and heather, juniper and gorse,
Braving all weathers. I, with gun, one day
Will cater for you, and go forth to slay
The grouse in corries, where they love to dwell;
Or sit with you upon some granite fell,
And talk for hours of high philosophy,
Or sun ourselves in warmth of poesy:
And should these tire, with rod in hand, we'll go
To streams that leap—too frolicsome to flow—
Angling for trout, and catch them by themselves,
In fancied citadel, beneath the shelves

Of slippery stone, o'er which the waters rush.
Let us away. My cheeks and forehead flush
At the mere thought; so glad would be my soul
To be alone with Nature for one whole
Untrammell'd month—having no thought of dross,
Or dull entanglements of gain and loss;
Of Blackstone drear, or Barnewall's Reports,
Or aught that smells of lawyers and the courts.
Let us away, this pleasant summer time,
Thou, Karl, canst muse, and shape the tuneful rhyme
Amidst thy well-beloved hills and straths:
Thou, Patrick, canst ascend the mountain-paths,
Thy well-fill'd flask in pocket, and rehearse
Plain prose with me, as genial as his verse;
And wet or whet each argumental flaw
With running waters dash'd with usquebaugh."

Thus Alistor, a Templar keen and young,
Of a clear head, and of a fluent tongue,—
Subtle logician, but with earnest mind,
And heart brimful of hope for human kind,
Spake to his friends; and him, with voice of cheer,
Answer'd the rhymer: "Half one toilsome year
I've moil'd in cities, and, like thee, I long
To see the placid lochs, the torrents strong,
The purple moors, the white rocks crimson-crown'd,
And amber waters, in their depths embrown'd.
One month of freedom from the drowsy thrall
Of custom, would be health, joy, wisdom, all,
To us who know each other, and delight
To be let loose into the infinite

Of our own fancies—free from task and rule,
And all the stiff conventions of the school
Of the great world. Our tyrant, lean-faced Care,
Shall not pursue us to the mountain air,
If we play truant. Let us hence away,
And have one month of pleasure while we may."

Patrick, the rough in speech, the true in heart,
A sculptor, born to elevate his art,
And loving it with fervour such as burn'd
In old Pygmalion's spirit, when he yearn'd
For the sweet image that his hands had made,
Shouted consent. "But whither bound?" he said;
"What far-off mountain summit shall we scale?
What salt-sea loch, winding through many a vale,
Shall we explore, or shall we rather glide
Through lakes inland, unruffled by a tide?—
Not that it matters. Thou, friend poet, know'st
Better than we all grandeurs of the coast:
The lochs, the straths, the hoary-headed Bens,
The windy corries, and the wild green glens,
And all the thunderous waterfalls that leap
Betwixt the Atlantic and the German deep;
And we will follow, if our guide thou'lt be,
By Lomond, Linnhe, Lochy, or Maree;
Through Ross-shire moors, to Hebridean isle,
Or 'mid the lordly mountains of Argyll,
Where'er thou wilt." The poet made reply,
With a keen pleasure sparkling in his eye:
"There is a valley, beautifully lone,
Rude of access, to few but hunters known:

A glen so full of gray magnificence,
Of rock and mountain, that with love intense,
Salvator's self, if thither he had stray'd,
Might, rapture-struck, a dwelling-place have made
Of some wild nook. There, fill'd with ecstasies,
He might have sat, his spirit in his eyes,
And all his mind impregnate, till he wrought
On the dumb canvas an immortal thought.
But not all rude and gloomy is the vale:
Ye wild-thyme odours, floating on the gale;
Ye tufts of heather, blooming on the slopes;
Ye birch-trees, waving from the rocky copes
Of many a hill, your brows festoon'd in braids,
Or drooping, like the locks of love-lorn maids;
Ye dark-green pines; ye larches, fan-like spread;
And ye, witch-scaring rowans, gleaming red;
Ye flowers innumerous, earth-jewels fair,
That lift your eyelids to the morning air;
And all ye torrents, that with eloquent voice
Call on the mountain echoes to rejoice,
And sing, amid the wilderness, a song
Of jubilant gladness, when the floods are strong;
Attest the wild luxuriance of the scene
That lengthening spreads (with many a strath between,
And purple moorland, haunt of birds and bees)
Around the fern-clad feet and shaggy knees
Of mighty Nevis! monarch of the hills,
The paramount of mountains, gemm'd with rills,
Scantily robed, his Titan-shoulders nude,
Lifting his head in royal solitude
Above his peers, and grimly looking down
Over all Britain from his misty crown!"

Thus spake the rhymer; and between them three
Was made a binding compact, suddenly,
That they should waken with the morning sun,
And journey northwards. As was said, was done.
Borne on the wings of steam ten leagues an hour,
They call'd it slow, but bless'd its mighty power;
And thought awhile, in pensive wonder dumb,
Of greater triumphs in the days to come;
When Distance,—dim tradition of the Past,
Worn-out idea, too absurd to last,—
Should bar no more the enterprise of man,
Nor Time compress his efforts to a span;
When docile lightnings, tether'd to a wire,
Should turn to messengers at his desire,
And bearing thoughts from Europe to Cathay,
Start at the dawning, and return ere day:
And of the social evils that should cease
In the new age of intercourse and peace;
When War, old tyrant, bloody-faced and pale,
Should yield his breath, run over on the rail;—
Crush'd by the car of Steam, no more to rise,
To fill the world with tears and agonies.

Short was their stay, nor turn'd they ev'n aside
To view the mighty city of the Clyde,
The great metropolis of plodding folk,
Tall chimneys, cotton, enterprise, and smoke;
But bound for Crinan while the morn was new,
Bade to the lovely Firth a fond adieu.

Clear was the sky; the sea reflected back
The morning lustre, as they held their track

By Rothesay, through the Kyles; and evermore
Some varied beauty woo'd them from the shore
To gaze upon it. Green hills speck'd with sheep,
Or jutting rocks that nodded o'er the deep;
And here and there, some mighty boulder-stone
Roll'd from a precipice to stand alone—
Memento of convulsions that had wrung
The hills to agony when earth was young.

High to the south, majestic Arran rear'd
Its jagged peaks, storm-batter'd, riv'n, and sear'd;
And blue Lochfine, enswathed by mountains dun,
Display'd her teeming bosom to the sun,
And raised her ripples to reflect the light,
While graceful sea-gulls, plumed in snowy white,
Follow'd the creaming furrow of the prow
With easy pinion pleasurably slow;
Then on the waters floated like a fleet
Of tiny vessels, argosies complete,
Such as brave Gulliver, deep wading, drew
Victorious from the forts of Blefuscu.

And sweet to these rejoicing mariners
Were Crinan's banks, o'ergrown with sunny furze,
With berried brambles, spotted fox-glove bells,
Like Mab's pagodas, built on pigmy fells,
With hawthorn bushes, purple-crested heath,
And orchis and anemone beneath,
In plenteous beauty. Disembarking here,
Fresh for the exercise, and full of cheer,
They walk'd rejoicing onward, staff in hand,
Across the isthmus, nine good miles of land,

And left the lingering track-boat in the locks,
While they went scrambling over briery rocks
For heather sprigs, to grace their caps of blue;
Then on again, rejoicing in the view
Of fertile valleys dotted black with kine,
And hills knee-deep in tamarisk and pine;
Discoursing as they went of mica-schist,
The old red sandstone, and the great "Fire mist"
Of nebulæ—exploded; and the birth,
Myriads of ages past, of a young earth,—
Still young and fresh, though venerably old;
And of the wondrous tale in "Cosmos" told,
Of heavenly architecture infinite,
Suns, systems, groups, revolving in the light
Of beauty eternal, and eternal law,—
Of infinite love, magnificence and awe.

And thus the hours were rapidly consumed
In furnace of their thought, and toil entomb'd
In mental working; so that when the sea
Burst on their startled vision suddenly,
They doubted if their eyes beheld indeed
Loch Crinan, and those seas that, like a mead
Sprinkled with flow'rs, were studded o'er with isles;
But soon they knew them gleaming in the smiles
Of an unclouded sun; and once again
Stepping on ship-board, steam'd along the main.

Most lovely, oh, most beautiful and grand
Were all the scenes of this romantic land!
Isle after isle, with gray empurpled rocks,
Breasted in steadfast majesty the shocks,

Stupendous, of the wild Atlantic wave;
Many a desolate sonorous cave
Re-echoed through its inmost vaults profound
The mighty diapason and full sound
Of Corryvreckan—awful orator—
Preaching to lonely isles with eloquent roar;
Many a mountain rear'd its lordly crest,
Bronzed or empurpled by the radiant west;
Many a hill-girt rock indented far
The mainland; many a high and frowning scaur,
The haunt of sea-fowl, raised its barren form,
Furrow'd with age, defiant of the storm;
And over all this hazy realm was spread
A halo of sad memories of the dead:
Of mournful love-tales; of old tragedies,
Filling the heart with pity, and the eyes
With tears, at bare remembrance; and old songs
Of love's endurance, love's despair, love's wrongs,
And triumph o'er all obstacles at last;
And all the grief and passion of the past.
Invoking these to daylight from the womb
Of dim tradition, into fuller bloom
Of their fresh fancy, greater ravishment
Was it to them to ponder as they went
Upon each legend in its own sad place,
To which it lent a beauty and a grace.

And when they reach'd the rock-bound shore of Mull,
A land of driving sleets and vapours dull,
But fill'd with mournful grandeur and austere
Magnificence, the Western wave shone clear

In the last beams of day. The dying light,
Ere it departed, swathed each mountain-height
In robes of purple; and adown the west,
Where sea and sky seem'd mingling—breast to breast—
Drew the dense banks of ponderous clouds, and spread
A mantle o'er them of a royal red,
Belted with purple—lined with amber—tinged
With fiery gold—and blushing-purple fringed.

And gorgeous was it o'er the Western Isles
To gaze upon the sunset 'mid those piles
Of mountainous clouds. They rear'd their sunny copes
Like heavenly Alps, with cities on their slopes,
Built amid glaciers—bristling fierce with towers,
Turrets and battlements of warlike powers—
Jaggèd with priestly pinnacles and spires—
And crown'd with domes, that glitter'd in the fires
Of the slant sun, like smithied silver bright;—
The capitals of Cloudland. When the light
Grew paler, and the Eastern dark came down,
And o'er the mystery drew his mantle brown,
'Twas lovely still to watch the shore and sea
Robed in the garment of obscurity;
To see the headlands looming through the mist,
As if dissever'd from the earth, they wist
Not altogether of which element
They were a part, indissolubly blent.

The lights of Oban glimmer'd faint and far,
And over Cruachan shone out one star
Attendant on the moon; who, issuing forth
Yellow and full, display'd to all the north

Her matron face, and o'er each eastern hill
Pour'd sleepy lustre. Beautifully still
Lay Lochlin in her beams—Lochlin whose breast
Wafted so oft the chieftains of the west
To bloody warfare; Lochlin that of yore
The galleys of the Gael to battle bore
Against the men of haughty Innisfail;
Lochlin of storms, where Fingal spread his sail
To meet Cuchullin; Lochlin of the spears;
Blue Lochlin of the songs of other years.
A mournful sea it was, a mournful shore;
But yet so lovely, vestured in the hoar
Antiquity of many memories,
That they regretted when their watchful eyes
Descried Fortwilliam and their journey's end,
And great Ben Nevis, corried, strath'd, and glenn'd,
Rising before them. Soon the sorrow pass'd,—
For they had reached a resting-place at last,
Where for a season they might feed Delight
On Beauty, and in worldly Care's despite
Give themselves up to Nature—not in part,
But with all energy of mind and heart,—
That, ere returning to the world again,
That little month might make them better men.
And what they talk'd of, what they dream'd or sung,
What tales they told, or beads of fancy strung,
What aspirations of a better time,
Thev form'd for men, behold in rhythm and rhyme.

THE SEA KING'S BURIAL.

THE SEA-KING'S BURIAL.

["The old Norse kings, when about to die, had their body laid into a ship; the ship sent forth with sails set, and slow fire burning in it, that, once out at sea, it might blaze up in flame, and in such manner bury worthily the old hero, at once in the sky and in the ocean."—CARLYLE'S *Hero Worship*.]

I.

"My strength is failing fast,"
Said the Sea-king to his men;—
"I shall never sail the seas
Like a conqueror, again.
But while yet a drop remains
Of the life-blood in my veins,
Raise, oh, raise me from the bed;—
Put the crown upon my head;—
Put my good sword in my hand;
And so lead me to the strand,
Where my ship at anchor rides
Steadily;
If I cannot end my life
In the bloody battle-strife,
Let me die as I have lived,
On the sea."

II.

They have raised King Balder up,
Put his crown upon his head;

They have sheath'd his limbs in mail,
And the purple o'er him spread;
And amid the greeting rude
Of a gathering multitude,
Borne him slowly to the shore—
All the energy of yore
From his dim eyes flashing forth—
Old sea-lion of the North;—
As he look'd upon his ship
Riding free.
And on his forehead pale
Felt the cold refreshing gale,
And heard the welcome sound
Of the sea.

III.

"Hurra! for mighty Balder!
As he lived, so he will die!
Hurra! hurra! for Balder!"
Said the crowd as he went by.
"He will perish on the wave,
Like the old Vikinger brave;
And in high Valhalla's halls
Hold eternal festivals;
And drink the blood-red draught
None but heroes ever quaff'd,
With Odin and the spirits
Of the free.
In the fire, or in the wreck,
He will die upon the deck,
And be buried like a monarch
Of the sea."

IV.

Old Balder heard their shouts
As they bore him to the beach;
And his fading eye grew bright
With the eloquence of speech,
As he heard the mighty roar
Of the people on the shore,
And the trumpets pealing round
With a bold triumphal sound,
And saw the flags afar
Of a hundred ships of war,
That were riding in the harbour
Gallantly.
And said Balder to his men—
And his pale cheek flush'd again—
"I have lived, and I will die
On the sea."

V.

They have borne him to the ship
With a slow and solemn tread;
They have placed him on the deck
With his crown upon his head,
Where he sat as on a throne;
And have left him there alone,
With his anchor ready weigh'd,
And the snowy sails display'd
To the favouring wind, once more
Blowing freshly from the shore;
And have bidden him farewell
Tenderly;

Saying, "King of mighty men,
We shall meet thee yet again,
In Valhalla, with the monarchs
Of the sea."

VI.

Underneath him in the hold
They had placed the lighted brand;
And the fire was burning slow
As the vessel from the land,
Like a stag-hound from the slips,
Darted forth from out the ships;—
There was music in her sail
As it swell'd before the gale,
And a dashing at her prow
As it cleft the waves below,
And the good ship sped along,
Scudding free.
As on many a battle morn
In her time she had been borne,
To struggle, and to conquer
On the sea.

VII.

And the King with sudden strength
Started up, and paced the deck,
With his good sword for his staff,
And his robe around his neck;—
Once alone, he waved his hand
To the people on the land;—
And with shout and joyous cry
Once again they made reply,

Till the loud exulting cheer
Sounded faintly on his ear;
For the gale was o'er him blowing,
Fresh and free;
And ere yet an hour had pass'd,
He was driven before the blast,
And a storm was on his path,
On the sea.

VIII.

And still upon the deck—
While the storm about him rent,
King Balder paced about
Till his failing strength was spent.
Then he stopp'd awhile to rest—
Cross'd his hands upon his breast,
And look'd upward to the sky,
With a dim but dauntless eye;
And heard the tall mast creak,
And the fitful tempest speak
Shrill and fierce, to the billows
Rushing free;
And within himself he said,
"I am coming, oh, ye dead!
To join you in Valhalla,
O'er the sea.

IX.

"So blow, ye tempests—blow,
And my spirit shall not quail;
I have fought with many a foe;—
I have weather'd many a gale;

And in this hour of death,
Ere I yield my fleeting breath—
Ere the fire now burning slow
Shall come rushing from below,
And this worn and wasted frame
Be devoted to the flame—
I will raise my voice in triumph,
Singing free;—
To the great All-father's home
I am driving through the foam,
I am sailing to Valhalla,
O'er the sea.

X.

"So, blow, ye stormy winds—
And ye flames ascend on high;—
In the easy, idle bed
Let the slave and coward die!
But give me the driving keel,
Clang of shields and flashing steel;—
Or my foot on foreign ground
With my enemies around!
Happy, happy, thus I'd yield,
On the deck or in the field,
My last breath, shouting on
'To Victory.'
"But since this has been denied,
They shall say that I have died
Without flinching, like a monarch
Of the sea."

XI.

And Balder spake no more,
And no sound escaped his lip;—
And he look'd, yet scarcely saw
The destruction of his ship;
Nor the fleet sparks mounting high,
Nor the glare upon the sky;—
Scarcely heard the billows dash,
Nor the burning timber crash;—
Scarcely felt the scorching heat
That was gathering at his feet,
Nor the fierce flames mounting o'er him
Greedily.
But the life was in him yet,
And the courage to forget
All his pain, in his triumph
On the sea.

XII.

Once alone a cry arose,
Half of anguish, half of pride,
As he sprang upon his feet,
With the flames on every side.
"I am coming!" said the King,
"Where the swords and bucklers ring—
Where the warrior lives again
With the souls of mighty men—
Where the weary find repose,
And the red wine ever flows;—
I am coming, great All-Father,
Unto thee!

Unto Odin, unto Thor,
And the strong true hearts of yore—
I am coming to Valhalla,
O'er the sea."

XIII.

Red and fierce upon the sky
Until midnight, shone the glare,
And the burning ship drove on—
Like a meteor of the air.
She was driven and hurried past,
'Mid the roaring of the blast.
And of Balder, warrior-born,
Naught remain'd at break of morn,
On the charr'd and blacken'd hull,
But some ashes and a skull;
And still the vessel drifted
Heavily,
With a pale and hazy light
Until far into the night,
When the storm had spent its rage
On the sea.

XIV.

Then the ocean ceased her strife
With the wild winds lull'd to rest,
And a full, round, placid moon
Shed a halo on her breast;
And the burning ship still lay
On the deep sea, far away;

From her ribs of solid oak,
Pouring forth the flame and smoke;
Until, burnt through all her bulk
To the water's edge, the hulk
Down a thousand fathoms sunk
Suddenly,
With a low and sullen sound;
While the billows sang around
Sad requiems for the monarch
Of the sea.

THE DANCE OF BALLOCHROY.

I.

"If e'er you woo'd a loving maid,
And having won her, you betray'd,
Beware, Lord Edward, thoughtless boy,
Nor pass the hills of Ballochroy.

II.

"For there, 'tis said, the livelong nights
The sward is trod by elves and sprites,
And shadowy forms of maids departed,
And ghosts of women broken-hearted.

III.

"And aye they dance a mystic round
Upon these knolls of haunted ground,
And sing sweet airs till break of day,
To lure the traveller from his way.

IV.

"Though if your soul from guilt be clear,
Ride boldly on;—you need not fear;
For pleasant sounds, and sights of joy,
Shall hem you round on Ballochroy.

V.

"But if you've brought a maid to death
By guileful words and breach of faith,
Shut ear and eye, nor look behind,
Nor hear their voices on the wind.

VI.

"They'll seek your senses to entrance—
They'll woo you to their airy dance;
And press, with winning smiles and quips,
Their melting kisses to your lips:

VII.

"And every kiss shall be a dart
That through your lips shall pierce your heart;
For short the life and short the joy
Of those who dance on Ballochroy."

VIII.

Lord Edward laugh'd his words to scorn—
"I must be wed to-morrow morn;
Your idle tale I may not hear;
I cannot linger from my dear."

IX.

He gave the reins to his dapple gray,
And o'er the mountain rode away;
And the old man sigh'd, "I wish him joy
On the haunted hills of Ballochroy!"

X.

And three miles west, and three miles north,
Over the moorland went he forth,
And thought of his bonny blushing May,
The fairest maid of Oronsay.

XI.

And he thought of a lady dead and gone—
Of Ellen, under the kirk-yard stone;
And then he whistled a hunting-song
To drown remembrance of a wrong.

XII.

But still it came. "Alas!" thought he,
"I fear she died for love of me:
Soft be her sleep in the fresh green sod—
I trust her spirit is with her God.

XIII.

"But to-morrow is my bridal day
With the bonnie Bell of Oronsay;
From her no fate my soul shall sever,
So let the past be past for ever."

XIV.

And still he whistled his hunting-tune,
Till high in the heavens arose the moon,
And had no thought but of future joy,
Till he came to the hills of Ballochroy.

XV.

And there, beneath a birken-tree,
He found a lady fair to see,
With eyes that might the stars eclipse,
And a smile upon her ripe red lips.

XVI.

Her garments seem'd of azure bright,
Her dainty hands were rosy white,
And her golden hair so long and sleek,
Fell clustering o'er each glowing cheek.

XVII.

He gazed upon this bonnie May,
Fairer than Bell of Oronsay,
Fairer than Ellen, dead and gone,
Or any maid the sun shone on.

XVIII.

"Oh, lady dear! the night is chill,
The dews are damp upon the hill,
A fitful wind begins to moan—
What brings thee here so late alone?"

XIX.

The lady blush'd, and on her tongue—
Timid—the faltering answer hung—
"I have come for thee, dear lord," she said,
And on his arm her hand she laid.

XX.

"For I have loved thee long and well,
More than a maiden ought to tell,
And I sit beneath this birken-tree
To pass one hour of love with thee."

XXI.

He sprang from his steed of dapple gray,
And at the lady's feet he lay;
Her lily hand in his he press'd,
And lean'd his head upon her breast.

XXII.

Her long fair tresses o'er him hung,
As round his neck her arm she flung;
Her beauty charm'd both touch and sight—
His pulse beat quicker with delight:—

XXIII.

"Oh, lady dear! these eyes of mine
Never saw beauty like to thine!
Those loving lips, oh, let me kiss!
Never was rapture like to this!"

XXIV.

She smiled upon him as he spoke,
And on his ear these accents broke;
"Deep was the love for thee I bore—
Thou shalt be mine for evermore.

XXV.

"Come to my bower—'tis fair to see,
And all prepared, dear lord, for thee;
Come!" and such smiles her face suffused,
He had been stone had he refused.

XXVI.

His heart was full, his reeling brain
Felt the sharp pleasure prick like pain;
And his eyes grew dim with love and joy
On the haunted hills of Ballochroy.

XXVII.

On every side—above—below—
He heard a strain of music flow,
Dying in murmurs on his ear,
Gentle and plaintive, soft and clear.

XXVIII.

Anon a bolder voice it took,
Till all the air with music shook—
A full, inspiring, martial strain,
Heaving like waves upon the main.

XXIX.

Amid the tangling flowers and grass
The fitful echoes seem'd to pass;
And then it sank, and sweet and slow,
Mingled the notes of joy and woe;—

XXX.

Then changed again: a jocund lay
Rose 'mid the tree-tops far away;
And brisk and light, and tuned to pleasure,
Floated in air the merry measure.

XXXI.

And nearer as the rapture came,
He felt its power in all his frame;
His pulse beat quick, his eyes grew bright,
His limbs grew supple with delight.

XXXII.

With throbbing heart and loving look,
The lady by the hand he took;
And as she smiled, her fairy feet
Moved to the measure brisk and sweet.

XXXIII.

He would not, if he could, resist,
Her beauty wrapp'd him like a mist;
And gliding with her, kind yet coy,
They danced the dance of Ballochroy.

XXXIV.

He clasp'd her round the dainty waist,
Their glowing hands were interlaced;
And now they glided—now they flew—
And tripp'd in circles o'er the dew.

XXXV.

And still the music sounded high
The full free tide of harmony;
Responsive still to every note
Their nimble footsteps seem'd to float.

XXXVI.

And now they bounded, now they tripp'd,
With panting pleasure, open-lipp'd,
And brisker, merrier, louder still
Sounded the music o'er the hill.

XXXVII.

Faint with the joy, he craved delay;
But no—his limbs refused to stay,
And danced impulsive to the sound,
And traced a circle on the ground.

XXXVIII.

There seem'd a film before his eyes—
He saw new shapes of beauty rise;—
They seem'd to gather at the tune
Between him and the western moon.

XXXIX.

In robes of azure and of green,
Amber and white, and purple sheen—
A troop of maidens young and fair,
With sparkling eyes and flowing hair.

XL.

And as before his sight they pass'd,
Each maid seem'd lovelier than the last,
And smiled upon him as she came,
With looks of love, and eyes of flame.

XLI.

Then smoothing back their tresses bright,
They join'd their fingers long and white,
And lightly shook their sparkling feet
To the glad measure as it beat.

XLII.

And as the fairy round they danced,
And now retreated, now advanced,
Their noiseless footsteps on the sod
Left a green circle where they trod.

XLIII.

Like dragon-flies upon a stream,
Or motes upon a slanting beam,
They parted—met—retired—entwined
Their loose robes waving in the wind.

XLIV.

Transparent as the network light
Spun by the gossamer at night,
Through every fold each rounded limb
Shone warm and beautiful, but dim.

XLV.

Dazzled and reeling with delight,
He turn'd away his aching sight,
Then fell exhausted in a swoon,
In the full radiance of the moon.

XLVI.

Not long endured his soul's eclipse;
He felt warm kisses on his lips,
And heard a voice in accents clear
Breathe a soft whisper in his ear,—

XLVII.

"Rise, my dear lord! shake off this trance,
And join my sisters in their dance;
'Tis all to give thee joy they play;
My hand shall guide thee—come away!"

XLVIII.

He rose;—her bright eyes brighter shone,
Raining kind looks to cheer him on;
While the celestial music still
Roll'd its glad echoes o'er the hill.

XLIX.

And once again the dance they twined—
They seem'd like feathers on the wind—
Their hands they waved, their feet they twirl'd—
They ran, they leap'd, they tripp'd, they whirl'd.

L.

But as he danced his eyes grew dim,
His blood ran thick through every limb;
And every face, so fair and bright,
Appear'd distorted to his sight.

LI.

The lustre of their eyes was gone,
Their cheeks grew wrinkled, pale, and wan;
Their fair plump arms grew shrivell'd skin,
Their voices hoarse, and sharp, and thin.

LII.

Bloodshot and blear, and hollow-eyed,
Each raised her finger to deride;
And each, more hideous than the last,
Chatter'd and jabber'd as she pass'd.

LIII.

And with discordant yell and shout,
They wheel'd in frantic droves about,
And gibing, in his visage, scowl'd,
And moan'd, and shriek'd, and laugh'd, and howl'd.

LIV.

Again he fell in speechless dread;
And then came one with drooping head,
And looks all pity and dismay,
And gazed upon him where he lay.

LV.

Her glancing eyes were black as jet,
Her fair pale cheeks with tears were wet;
And beauty, modesty, and grace
Strove for the mastery on her face.

LVI.

He knew her well; and, as she wept,
A cold, cold shudder o'er him crept:
'Twas Ellen's self! ah, well he knew
That face so fair—that heart so true!

LVII.

He felt her tear-drops fall and flow,
But they were chill as melted snow;
Then looking on her face, he sigh'd,
Felt her cold kiss, and shivering—died!

LVIII.

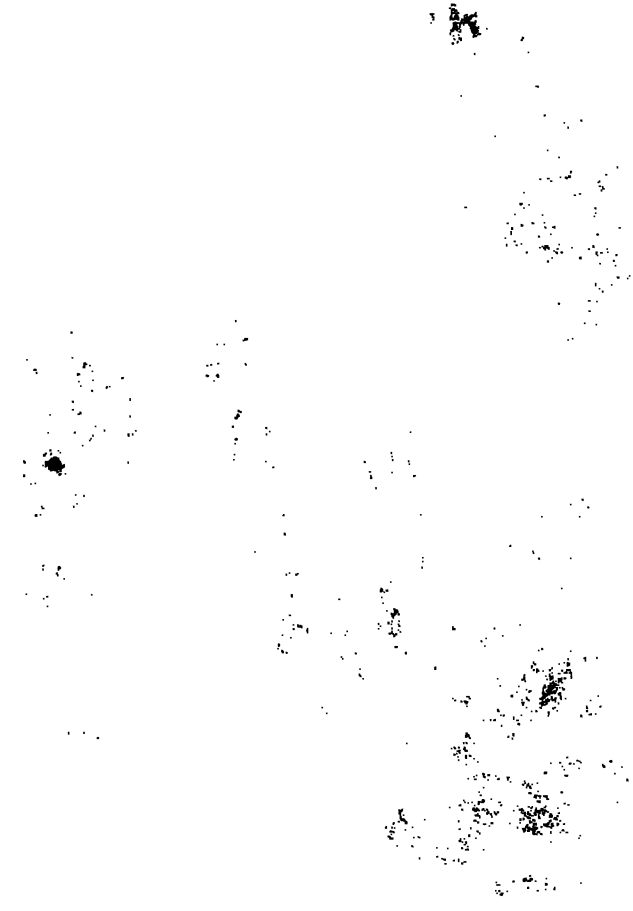
Next day, with many an anxious fear,
His father sought him far and near;
And his sad mother, old and gray,
Wept with the bride of Oronsay.

LIX.

They found his body on the knoll,
And pray'd for mercy on his soul;
And his bride a widow's weeds put on,
And mourn'd Lord Edward, dead and gone.

LX.

If you have brought a maid to death
By guileful words and breach of faith—
In weal or woe, in grief or joy,
Beware the hills of Ballochroy!



ST. COLUMBA.

ST. COLUMBA; OR THE COUNTING OF THE ISLES.

[The following legend, with some slight variation, is current in the Hebrides. One version states, that the Saint takes his stand upon the walls of the ruined cathedral of Iona, and counts the isles; but makes no mention of the ghostly company introduced into the ballad.]

I.

Hush'd were the winds, and not a breath
  Disturb'd the peaceful sea,
And even to Staffa's echoing caves
The large, uneasy, western waves
  Came beating quietly;
Starless and moonless was the night,
  And on the waters lay,
Like silence palpable to sight,
  Thick wreaths of vapour gray.

II.

Far in the west, 'mid rain and mist,
  Upon the deep afloat,
Without an oar, without a sail,
  Came down a little boat:
Amid the mazes of the isles
  By hands unseen propell'd,
By frowning scaur, through whirlpool roar,
  Its noiseless way it held;
Like a shadow gliding, dark and slow,
Unwitting how the winds might blow.

III.

And at the stern, with downcast eyes,
  And hands upon his breast,
There sat the figure of a man,
  Serene, like one possess'd
With peaceful thoughts, that quite absorb'd
  All faculties combined,
So that his sight, to left nor right,
  Ne'er wander'd from his mind,
Nor his ear heard the murmur low
Of waters cleaving at the prow.

IV.

Down through the seas, where Lewis afar
  The dim horizon streaks;
By Skye, where lordly Cuillens rear
  Their high fantastic peaks;
By Ronan and her sister isle;
  By Coll and green Tiree;
And by the giant crags of Mull
  That frown upon the sea;
By Ulva's isle and Fingal's cave,
Palace and wonder of the wave;—

V.

Still on—still on—till morning dawn
  The boat pursued its way:
Still on—still on—till night, slow-drawn,
  Through sleet and vapour gray,
It held its course amid the Isles,
  Nor stopp'd by night or day;

And still the figure, heeding nought,
Sat silent, gather'd in his thought.

VI.

Behind the boat, the waters shone
With phosphorescent light—
Slow from the keel, like glancing steel,
The waves fell off, all night.
At length, far looming through the mist
That now from heaven upclear'd,
Iona, sepulchre of kings,
The holy isle, appear'd—
The Culdee's bower, the place of graves,
The fair green "island of the waves."

VII.

The moon, new risen, look'd forth from heaven,
And purpled every height,
And waves upheaved their silvery sides,
Rejoicing in the light—
And mountain tops, with radiance touch'd,
Look'd placidly below,
As onwards to Iona's isle
The boat went gliding slow;
And the lone traveller stepp'd on shore,
Leaning upon the staff he bore.

VIII.

A long loose mantle wrapp'd his limbs,
A cowl conceal'd his head;
And meek yet lordly was his look,
And solemn was his tread.

And lo—to meet him on the beach,
A pale and shadowy band,
Barefoot, bareheaded, holding each
A taper in his hand,
Came in long line from Oran's shrine,
And gather'd on the strand.

IX.

No word was said, no sign was made,—
Spectres all pale and wan,
With earthward looks—'mid silence deep—
Their noiseless march began.
And slow they follow'd where he led;
And, moved as by a blast,
The doors of St. Columba's kirk
Flew open as they pass'd,
And show'd the lights on roof and wall
Lit up for solemn festival.

X.

And choral voices sweet and clear,
Drawn out in cadence long,
Re-echoed through the vaulted aisles
Attuned to holy song;
And music like a flowing tide
From organ-pipes unseen,
Pour'd forth a full majestic strain
Each solemn pause between;
And myrrh and incense fill'd the air,
And shadowy lips were moved in prayer.

XI.

Each damp and moss-grown sepulchre,
Each vault and charnel cold,
Each grassy mound let forth its dead,
And from th' enfettering mould
Dim shadows of departed kings,
Sceptred and robed and crown'd,
And mitred bishops, meek and pale,
And abbots cowl'd and gown'd,
Came thronging in the moonlight gray
In long impalpable array.

XII.

And fierce Vikinger, swathed in mail,
Pallid and gaunt, stood forth,—
Old pirates, that to spoil the land
Had issued from the North.
Lords of the Isles, and Thanes, and Jarls,
Barons and Marmors grim,
With helm on head and glaive in hand,
In rusty armour dim,
Responsive to some powerful call
Gather'd obedient, one and all.

XIII.

And now the choral voices hush'd,
And ceased the organ tone;
As to the altar-steps, high raised,
Sad, silent, and alone,

The traveller pass'd.—To him all eyes
Turn'd reverent as he trod,
And whispering voices, each to each,
Proclaim'd the man of God—
Columba, in his ancient place,
Radiant with glory and with grace.

XIV.

Back fell his cowl—his mantle dropp'd,
And in a stream of light,
A halo round his aged head,
And robed in dazzling white—
The saint with smiles of heavenly love
Stretch'd forth his hands to pray,
And kings and thanes, and monks and jarls,
Knelt down in their array,
Silent, with pallid lips compress'd,
And hands cross'd humbly on their breast.

XV.

He craved a blessing on the Isles,
And named them, one by one—
Fair western isles that love the glow
Of the departing sun.—
From Arran looming in the south,
To northern Orcades,
Then to Iona back again,
Through all those perilous seas,
Three nights and days the saint had sail'd,
To count the Hebrides.

XVI.

He loved them for Iona's sake,
The isle of prayer and praise,
Where Truth and Knowledge found a home
When fallen on evil days.
And now he bless'd them, each and all,
And pray'd that evermore,
Plenty and peace, and Christian love,
Might smile on every shore,
And that their mountain-glens might be
The abiding-places of the free.

XVII.

Then, as he ceased, Kings, Abbots, Earls,
And all the shadowy train,
Rose from their knees, and choral songs
Re-echoed loud again—
And then were hush'd—the lights burn'd dim,
And ere the dawn of day,
The saint and all the ghostly choir
Dissolved in mist away:
Aërial voices sounding still
Sweet harmonies from Duni's hill.

XVIII.

And every year Columba makes,
While yet the summer smiles,
Alone, within his spectral boat,
The circuit of the isles;—

And monks and abbots, thanes and kings,
From vault and charnel start,
Disburied, in the rite to bear
Their dim, allotted part,
And crave, upon their bended knees,
A blessing on the Hebrides.

THE "DREAM," BY BEAULY, ROSS-SHIRE.

[The high banks of the Beauly, near Kilmorack, in Ross-shire, are covered with birch-trees, ascending to a great height, with occasionally rocks, fir-plantations, and mountain-paths to vary the scene; and the river foaming and breaking into numerous falls below. This magnificent tract, which extends about three miles, is termed "the Dream," a name that seems to harmonize with the wild beauty of the landscape. The true orthography, however, is the *Drhuim*, signifying, in the Gaelic language, a *ridge.—The Highland Note-book, by* R. CARRUTHERS.]

I.

In Lomond's isles the rowans grow,
In sweet Glennant the lintocks tarry,
And grand is Cruachan by Loch Awe,
And bonny are the birks of Garry.
Belovèd spots!—yet dearer far,
And cherish'd in my heart more truly,
Are sweet Kilmorack's lingering falls,
The lovely "Dream" and banks of Beauly.

II.

The joyous river runs its course,
Now dark and deep, now clear and shallow;
And high on either side the rocks
Rise, crown'd with mosses green and yellow;
And birks, the "damsels of the wood,"
So slim and delicately shaded,
Stand in the clefts, and look below,
With graceful forms and tresses braided.

III.

And rowans flourish on the heights,
With scarlet bunches thickly studded,
And brambles, heavy-laden, trail
Their luscious berries purple-blooded;
And on the bosom of the hills,
Wooing the bees, the modest heather
Waves to the wind its hardy bells,
And blossoms in the wildest weather.

IV.

Oh that I might, 'mid scenes like this,
In the fresh noon of life and feeling,
Build up a bower where I might dwell,
All nature to my soul revealing.
Far from the bustling crowds that swarm
'Mid the great city's endless riot,
How happily my days would flow
In converse with these woodlands quiet!

V.

Unmindful of the hollow pomp
And festering coronet of splendour—
Heedless of Fame, and all the din
Of shouting voices that attend her;—
With leisure, when my fancy led,
To roam the glen or forest thorough,
To climb the mountain-top, and trace
The torrent upward, by its furrow.—

VI.

To let the winds in stormy nights
  Blow in my hair; to tread the heather
In tempest and in calm alike,
  Braving, plaid-bound, the roughest weather;—
To hold communion night and day
  With Nature—to her bosom turning
Aye for relief—and from her face
  New hope, new joy, new wisdom learning.

VII.

Oh for a bower where I might dwell
  In this contemplative seclusion,
With wealth sufficient for the wants
  Of temperate Nature—not profusion.
A cottage on the green hill-side,
  Sacred to friendship, love, and duty—
A garden fair, with trees for fruit,
  And some for shadow and for beauty.

VIII.

Here, not unmindful of my kind,—
  Flying the world, but never scorning,—
My voice, to solemn lay attuned,
  Or cheerful as the lark's at morning,
Might reach the crowds that I had left,
  And bear my thoughts to many a dwelling,
Where human hearts might throb to hear
  The tale I would *delight* in telling.

IX.

The tale, or song, whose burden still,
Serene or glad, should preach to sorrow,—
That sunshine follows after rain,
And after darkest night a morrow;—
That those who strive with evil days,
If their own strength they would but measure,
Might turn endurance into joy,
And outward woe to inward pleasure;

X.

That earth, though fill'd with care and grief,
Has joy for those who wisely seek it;
That if the heart be truly taught,
It may defy the world to break it;—
That love and virtue are not names,
But things, to those who prize them given;
And that the more we love our kind,
The more our bliss in earth and heaven.

XI.

But fare thee well, sweet Beauly stream!
Upon thy banks I may not linger;—
My task is set, my daily toil
Beckons me hence with ruthless finger.
Farewell, and when in cities pent,
I'll cherish thy remembrance duly,
And long for autumn days again,
To lead my footsteps back to Beauly

THE INVASION OF THE NORSEMEN.

I.

HACO, king of Norway, call'd his men of might,
Sea-captains and Vikinger—his veterans in fight;
And set sail for Scotland's coast
With a well-apparell'd host,
Fully twenty thousand strong—
When the summer days grew long—
In the fairest fleet that ever the North Sea billows bore,
To harry it, and pillage it, and hold it evermore.

II.

Mile on mile extended, o'er the ocean blue,
Sail'd the ships of battle, white and fair to view—
Running races on the sea,
With their streamers waving free,
From their saucy bows all day
Dashing up the scornful spray,
And leaving far behind them, in the darkness of the night,
Unborrow'd from the firmament, long tracks of liquid light.

III.

Past the isles of Shetland lay the monarch's path,
Round the isles of Orkney and the Cape of Wrath,
'Mid the Islands of the West
That obey'd his high behest—
The Lewis, and Uist, and Skye,
And the countless isles that lie
Between the wide Atlantic and Albyn's mountains brown,
And paid him homage duly, and fealty to his crown.

IV.

Music and rejoicing follow'd on their way,
Drinking and carousing nightly till the day.
Every sailor in the fleet
Felt his heart with pleasure beat,
Every soldier in the ships
Had a smile upon his lips,
As he drank, and saw, in fancy, reeking sword and flaming brand,
And the rapine, and the violence, and the carnage of the land.

V.

Not amid the mountains of the rugged North
Would the mighty Haco send his legions forth;
Not by highland loch or glen
Would he land his eager men;—
Not on banks of moorland stream
Were their thirsty swords to gleam;—

But further to the southward, from the rocks of bare Argyll
To the sloping hills of Renfrew, and the grassy meads of Kyle.

VI.

In the vales of Carrick, smiling by the sea,
In the woods of Lennox, in the Lothians three,
There was fatness all the year—
There were sheep and fallow-deer—
There was mead to fill the horn—
There were kye and there was corn,—
There was food for hungry Norsemen, with spoil to last them long,
And lordly towers to revel in, with music and with song.

VII.

Like scarts upon the wing, by the hope of plunder led,
Pass'd the ships of Haco, with sails like pinions spread.
But the tidings went before
To the inland, from the shore;
And from crag to mountain crag,
At the terror of his flag,
Arose a cry of warning, and a voice of loud alarm,
That call'd the startled multitudes to gather and to arm.

VIII.

Every mountain-summit had its beal-fire bright;
All Argyll, ere sunset, crown'd its hills with light,

And from Morven to Cantyre
Lit the chain of signal-fire;
From Cantyre to Cowal's coast
Blazed a warning of the host
Of savage Norse invaders that to spoil and harry came,
With their lust and with their hunger—with the sword and with the flame.

IX.

Glen call'd out to mountain—mount to moorland brown,
Village call'd to village, town gave voice to town;—
And the bells in every tower
Rang the tocsin hour by hour,
Until old Dunedin heard,
And the Lothians three were stirr'd,
And sent their yeomen westward to struggle hand to hand
For their wives and for their children, for their home and native land.

X.

Wives had no endearment for a laggard lord;
Maidens had no love-looks and no kindly word
For the lover who was slow
To march out against the foe.
Even maids themselves put on
Coat of mail and habergeon;
Threw the snood off for the helmet, left the distaff for the spear,
To die for sake of Scotland, with a sire or lover dear.

XI.

Young King Alexander march'd his legions forth,
From eastward to the westward, from southward to the north:
High his flashing falchion gleam'd,
In his blue eye valour beam'd,
In his heart high courage glow'd,
As in pride of youth he rode
With the flower of Scotland's people, to defend her sacred soil,
And repel the Norse marauders that came down for blood and spoil.

XII.

With him rode the Comyn, grown in battles gray,
With a thousand bowmen ready for the fray,
With a tongue to give command,
And a rough untiring hand;
With a cheek in combat scarr'd,
And a soul to pity hard;
When he drew his sword for battle, and flung away the sheath,
It was death to him who struggled with the Comyn of Monteith.

XIII.

And the Bishop of St. Andrew's, a priest but in his name,
In his heart a soldier, with all his warriors came.
And the stalwart Earl of Fife
Led his vassals to the strife—

Full a thousand fighting-men,
Strong of hand and sharp of ken,
And ready each to die at the bidding of his lord;
But readier still for Scotland to draw the avenging sword.

XIV.

From his northern mountains and his lochs afar
March'd the Earl of Caithness, ready aye for war,
With his pibroch sounding shrill
To his clansmen of the hill;
And the Earl of March, new wed,
Left his happy bridal bed
At the first war-cry of danger that broke upon his ears,
And join'd King Alexander, with twice a thousand spears.

XV.

Thirsting for the conquest, eager for the fray,
Haco sail'd by Arran at the dawn of day;
But as up the Firth of Clyde
He came proudly with the tide,
Rose a storm upon the deep,
And with wild and fitful sweep
Howl'd aloft amid the rigging; while the sun look'd pale and wan,
Through the clouds and driving vapours as the tempest hurried on.

XVI.

To the ship of Haco came his stanchest men—
Holder, Sweno, Ratho, Hingst, and Innisfen,
Irminsule, and Loke and Harr,
Each a chieftain fierce in war;
In the foray, hand to hand,
On the sea or on the land;
Loving fighting more than counsel, blazing torch than morning shine;
The foremost in the battle, and the hindmost at the wine.

XVII.

Short was Haco's counsel, and the signal flew
From captain on to captain, from crew again to crew,
That by Largs, ere noon of day,
They should land within the bay,—
And through all the ships there ran
A rejoicing, man with man,
That the hour had come at last, when the sword should leave its sheath,
And the cloth-yard shaft its quiver for the revelry of death.

XVIII.

Scotland's king was ready—Scotland's patriot men,
Marshall'd round their monarch from mountain, strath, and glen,
And from every height around
Seem'd to issue from the ground.

Thirty thousand men that day
Met the Norsemen in the bay,
And fought, but not for pillage, nor for glory in the strife,
But for God and for their country—for their freedom and their life.

XIX.

Loud the shock resounded on the battle-field,
Clink of sword and buckler, clang of spear and shield;
Whirr of arrows in the blast,
On their errand flying fast;
And a shouting loud and high,
And a shrill continuous cry,
From either side arising, as th' impetuous legions met,
And the green fresh sward was trodden deep, and dank, and gory-wet.

XX.

Loud the voice of Haco sounded 'mid the fray,
Alexander's louder cheer'd the Scots that day;
And the kings press'd on to meet,
Through the arrows thick as sleet,
Through the living and the dead,
Holding high the dauntless head—
To fight in single combat, and to struggle hand to hand,
For the glory of the battle and the mastery of the land.

XXI.

And the fierce Earl Comyn sought the Norseman
Harr;
The Bishop singled Ratho from the ranks of war;
And the Earls of March and Fife,
In the sharp-contested strife,
Fought with Irminsule and Loke,
Thrust for thrust, and stroke for stroke;
And the Earl of Caithness drove the haughty Innisfen
Back again into the ocean with a hundred of his men.

XXII.

Harr fell deadly wounded by the Comyn's blade;
Ratho fled to seaward, faint and sore dismay'd;
While Loke, with mortal wound,
Fell exhausted on the ground,
And Hingst sank down to rest
With the death-shaft in his breast;
When a sudden panic seized on the whole Norwegian
foe,
And they fled like flying dust, when the Norland
tempests blow.

XXIII.

Down upon them swooping in their sudden rout,
Came King Alexander with exulting shout—
Crying, "Strike for Scotland's sake,
And a bloody vengeance take
For the insult borne too long—
For the centuries of wrong,—

For the murder and the ravage they have done within
our lands;—
Down upon them, Scottish hearts! Strike, and spare
not, Scottish hands!"

XXIV.

Fighting, flying, struggling—with his scatter'd host
Haco saw, despairing, that the day was lost.
Of his twenty thousand men
Not a third were left him then,
The fearful tale to tell
Of the slaughter that befel;
And Haco, iron-hearted, who had never wept before,
With his hands his pale face cover'd, and sobb'd upon
the shore.

XXV.

Flying their pursuers, faint, with pallid lips,
Haco and his captains stagger'd to their ships;
And ere nightfall, many a one,
That had sail'd when day begun
As if life were in her sides
To defy the winds and tides,
Was driven before the tempest, her tall mast snapp'd
in twain,
A helpless wreck on Arran, ne'er to sail the seas again.

XXVI.

Through the Kyles, storm-batter'd, Haco held his way,
By Cantyre and Islay on to Colonsay:

And when dawn'd the morning light
Not a vessel was in sight,
But his own ship scudding by
On the gloomy shore of Skye,
Dismantled 'mid the hurricane that still around him blew,
With danger all around him and a spirit-broken crew

XXVII.

Thus he sail'd to Orkney; but by night nor day,
To his men around him, did one word betray
All the anguish of his heart—
Though at times a sudden start,
And a short uneasy pace,
And the flushing of his face,
Show'd the grief and rage within him, as he mourn'd with silent lips
For his hope of conquest lost, for his sailors and his ships.

XXVIII.

In the bay of Kirkwall, shelter'd from the gale,
His sad crew dropp'd their anchor, and furl'd the tatter'd sail.
And the King was led on shore,
Weak, and faint, and spirit-sore,
Seeing—heeding—knowing nought
But his own despairing thought—
A thought of bitter shame, that he had not died that day,
With his face towards the mountains, in the thickest of the fray.

XXIX.

To his couch they led him, once so bold and strong,
And they watch'd beside him tenderly and long;
But all human care was vain
To relieve him of his pain:
So the mighty Haco died
In his sorrow and his pride,
And they buried him in Orkney; and Norsemen never more
Set sail to harry Scotland, or plunder on her shore.

THE EVE OF FLODDEN.

["In the church of Linlithgow is shown the aisle where an apparition burst upon the sight of James IV., to warn him against the expedition, and which, as Lindsay of Pitscottie relates, as soon as it had delivered its message, 'vanished like a blink of the sun, or a whip of the whirlwind.' When the invading army was encamped upon the Boroughmuir, numberless midnight apparitions did squeak and gibber upon the streets of Edinburgh, threatening woe to the kingdom, and there was a spectral procession of heralds, who advanced to the Cross, and summoned the king and a long list of nobility to their final doom."]

I.

WHO are these so dim and wan,
Haggard, gaunt, and woe-begone!
Who in suits of silvery mail
Wander in the moonlight pale,
Through Dunedin's narrow street,
Sad and slow,
And with mournful voice repeat,
Singing low—
"Dim the night, but dark the morrow—
Long shall last the coming sorrow,—
Woe to Scotland, woe!"

II.

Helm on head and sword in hand,
Whence this melancholy band?
Even the banner that they bear
Droops dejected on the air,

As they walk with noiseless tread
To and fro,
And the sleeper from his bed
Rises slow,
Listening to that chant of sorrow—
"Dim the night, but dark the morrow—
Woe to Scotland, woe!"

III.

What they are, and their intent—
Whence they come, and whither bent—
If they come from kirkyard cold,
Or are men of mortal mould,
No one knows;—but all night long,
As they go,
There is heard a doleful song,
Clear, but low,—
"Deep the grief that's now beginning,
Scotland's loss is England's winning—
Woe to Scotland, woe!"

IV.

Never yet Dunedin's street
Saw such ghastly warriors meet.
Now upon the Cross they stay;
And a radiance clear as day,
When the day is dim and chill,
Seems to glow
All around; and from the hill
Overflow

Gable, tower, and steeple-crosses,
And the lonely wynds and closes:—
"Woe to Scotland, woe!"

V.

One steps forward from the rest,
Stately, gaunt, and richly dress'd;
And they form a circle round,
Sadly looking to the ground;
And a summons loud and shrill
Sounds below,
Downwards from the Calton Hill
Passing slow;
Then a trumpet-call to rally
Echoes over mount and valley—
"Woe to Scotland, woe!"

VI.

Then the ling'ring echoes die
Faint and fainter on the sky,
And the spokesman of the band
Raises high his mail'd right hand,
And exclaims with earnest voice,
Speaking slow:
"Long will Scotland's foes rejoice:—
Hearts shall glow
At recital of our story,
And of Scotland's faded glory.
Woe to Scotland, woe!"

VII.

"Nought shall bravely avail;
Dust before the wild March gale
Flies not faster than shall fly
Scotland's proudest chivalry,
Royal Stuart, when thy might
Stricken low,
Shall be scatter'd in the fight
By the foe,
And thy fairest ranks be trodden
On the bloody field of Flodden.
Woe to Scotland, woe!

VIII.

"Crawford, Huntley, and Montrose!
Loud your shrill war-trumpet blows;—
Home and Bothwell! high in air
Flaunt your banners free and fair;—
Lennox! well your stalwart men
Wield the bow;—
Fierce and fleet from hill and glen
On the foe,
From wild Cowal to the Grampians,
Rush, Argyll! your stoutest champions;—
Woe to Scotland, woe!

IX.

"But in vain shall they unite;
And in vain their swords shall smite;

And in vain their chiefs shall lead;
Vainly, vainly shall they bleed;—
England's hosts shall smite them down
At a blow,
And our country's ancient crown
Be laid low;
And for warrior's death-cold sleeping
Long shall last the wail and weeping—
Woe to Scotland woe!"

X.

Thus he speaks, and glides away,
Melting in the moonlight gray:
And the pale knights follow on
Through the darkness, and are gone.
But all night is heard the wail
Rising slow,
As the pauses of the gale
Come and go,—
"Dim the night and dark the morrow;
Long shall last the coming sorrow—
Woe to Scotland, woe!"

THE KELPIE OF CORRYVRECKAN.

[This story is a common one in the Western Isles, and among all the northern nations of Europe. Some of the incidents bear a resemblance to the Danish ballad of "The Wild Waterman," a translation of which was made into German, by Goethe.]

I.

He mounted his steed of the water clear,
And sat on his saddle of sea-weed sere;
He held his bridle of strings of pearl,
Dug out of the depths where the sea-snakes curl.

II.

He put on his vest of the whirlpool froth,
Soft and dainty as velvet cloth,
And donn'd his mantle of sand so white,
And grasp'd his sword of the coral bright.

III.

And away he gallop'd, a horseman free,
Spurring his steed through the stormy sea,
Clearing the billows with bound and leap—
Away, away, o'er the foaming deep!

IV.

By Scarba's rock, by Lunga's shore,
By Garveloch isles where the breakers roar,
With his horse's hoofs he dash'd the spray,
And on to Loch Buy, away, away!

V.

On to Loch Buy all day he rode,
And reach'd the shore as sunset glow'd,
And stopp'd to hear the sounds of joy
That rose from the hills and glens of Moy.

VI.

The morrow was May, and on the green
They'd lit the fire of Beltan E'en,
And danced around, and piled it high
With peat and heather and pine-logs dry.

VII.

A piper play'd a lightsome reel,
And timed the dance with toe and heel;
While wives look'd on, as lad and lass
Trod it merrily o'er the grass.

VIII.

And Jessie (fickle and fair was she)
Sat with Evan beneath a tree,
And smiled with mingled love and pride,
And half agreed to be his bride.

IX.

The Kelpie gallop'd o'er the green—
He seem'd a knight of noble mien,
And old and young stood up to see,
And wonder'd who the knight could be.

X.

His flowing locks were auburn bright,
His cheeks were ruddy, his eyes flash'd light;
And as he sprang from his good gray steed,
He look'd a gallant youth indeed.

XI.

And Jessie's fickle heart beat high,
As she caught the stranger's glancing eye;
And when he smiled, "Ah well," thought she,
"I wish this knight came courting me!"

XII.

He took two steps towards her seat—
"Wilt thou be mine, O maiden sweet?"
He took her lily-white hand, and sigh'd,
"Maiden, maiden, be my bride!"

XIII.

And Jessie blush'd, and whisper'd soft—
"Meet me to-night when the moon's aloft;—
I've dream'd, fair knight, long time of thee—
I thought thou camest courting me."

XIV.

When the moon her yellow horn display'd,
Alone to the trysting went the maid;
When all the stars were shining bright,
Alone to the trysting went the knight.

XV.

"I have loved thee long, I have loved thee well,
Maiden, oh more than words can tell!
Maiden, thine eyes like diamonds shine;
Maiden, maiden, be thou mine!"

XVI.

"Fair sir, thy suit I'll ne'er deny—
Though poor my lot, my hopes are high;
I scorn a lover of low degree—
None but a knight shall marry me."

XVII.

He took her by the hand so white,
And gave her a ring of the gold so bright;
"Maiden, whose eyes like diamonds shine—
Maiden, maiden, now thou'rt mine!"

XVIII.

He lifted her up on his steed of gray,
And they rode till morning away, away—
Over the mountain and over the moor,
And over the rocks, to the dark sea-shore.

XIX.

"We have ridden east, we have ridden west—
I'm weary, fair knight, and I fain would rest.
Say, is thy dwelling beyond the sea?
Hast thou a good ship waiting for me?"

XX.

"I have no dwelling beyond the sea,
I have no good ship waiting for thee:
Thou shalt sleep with me on a couch of foam,
And the depths of the ocean shall be thy home."

XXI.

The gray steed plunged in the billows clear,
And the maiden's shrieks were sad to hear.
"Maiden, whose eyes like diamonds shine—
Maiden, maiden, now thou'rt mine!"

XXII.

Loud the cold sea-blast did blow,
As they sank 'mid the angry waves below—
Down to the rocks where the serpents creep,
Twice five hundred fathoms deep.

XXIII.

At morn a fisherman sailing by
Saw her pale corse floating high:
He knew the maid by her yellow hair
And her lily skin so soft and fair.

XXIV.

Under a rock on Scarba's shore,
Where the wild winds sigh and the breakers roar,
They dug her a grave by the water clear,
Among the sea-weed salt and sere.

XXV.

And every year, at Beltan E'en,
The Kelpie gallops across the green,
On a steed as fleet as the wintry wind,
With Jessie's mournful ghost behind.

XXVI.

I warn you, maids, whoever you be,
Beware of pride and vanity;
And ere on change of love you reckon,
Beware the Kelpie of Corryvreckan.

LORD NITHSDALE'S DREAM IN THE TOWER OF LONDON.

[In the notes to Cromek's Remains of Nithsdale and Galloway Song will be found the full particulars of Lord Nithsdale's escape narrated in the simple and touching language of Winifred Lady Nithsdale, in a letter to her sister.]

I.

"FAREWELL to thee, Winifred, dearest and best!
Farewell to thee, wife of a courage so high!
Come hither, and nestle again in my breast,
Come hither, and kiss me again ere I die!
And when I am laid bleeding and low in the dust,
And yield my last breath at a tyrant's decree,
Look up—be resign'd—and the God of the just
Will shelter thy fatherless children and thee."

II.

She wept on his breast, but, ashamed of her fears,
She dash'd off the drops that ran warm down her cheek—
"Be sorrow for those who have leisure for tears,
Oh, pardon thy wife, that her soul was so weak!
There is hope for us still, and I will not despair,
Though cowards and traitors exult at thy fate;
I'll show the oppressors what woman can dare—
I'll show them that love can be stronger than hate."

LORD NITHSDALE'S DREAM.

III.

Lip to lip—heart to heart—and their fond arms entwined—
He has clasp'd her again, and again, and again;—
"Farewell to thee, Winifred, pride of thy kind,
Sole ray in my darkness—sole joy in my pain."
She has gone! He has heard the last sound of her tread—
He has caught the last glimpse of her robes at the door
She has gone! and the joy that her presence had shed,
Will cheer the sad heart of Lord Nithsdale no more.

IV.

The prisoner pray'd in his dungeon alone,
And thought of the morn and its dreadful array;
Then rested his head on his pillow of stone,
And slumber'd an hour ere the dawning of day.
Oh, balm of the weary!—oh, soother of pain!
That still to the sad givest pity and dole,
How gently, O Sleep, lay thy wings on his brain!
How sweet were thy dreams to his desolate soul!

V.

Once more on his green native braes of the Nith
He plucked the wild breckan, a frolicsome boy;
He sported his limbs in the waves of the frith;
He trod the green heather in gladness and joy;

On his gallant gray steed to the hunting he rode—
In his bonnet a plume, on his bosom a star—
And chased the red-deer to its mountain abode,
And track'd the wild roe to its covert afar.

VI.

The vision has changed;—in a midsummer night
He roam'd with his Winifred blooming and young;
He gazed on her face by the moon's mellow light,
And loving and warm were the words on his tongue;
Through good and through evil he swore to be true,
And love through all fortune his Winnie alone—
And he saw the red blush o'er her cheek as it flew,
And heard her sweet voice that replied to his own.

VII.

Once more it has changed; in his martial array
Lo! he rode at the head of his gallant young men,
For the pilroch was heard on the hills far away,
And the clans were all gathered from mountain and glen.
For the darling of Scotland, their exile adored;
They raised the loud slogan—they rushed to the strife,
Unfurl'd was the banner—unsheathed was the sword,
For the cause of their heart, that was dearer than life.

VIII.

Again—and the vision was lost to his sight;
But the phantom that followed was darksome and dread—
The morn of his doom had succeeded the night,
And a priest by his side said the prayers for the dead.
He heard the dull sound of the slow muffled drum,
And the hoarse sullen boom of the death-tolling bell.
The block was prepared and the headsman had come,
And the victim, bareheaded, walked forth from his cell.

IX.

No! no! 'twas but fancy—his hour was not yet—
And, waking, he turned on his pallet of straw,
And a form by his side he could never forget,
By the pale misty light of a taper he saw;——
"'Tis I—'tis thy Winifred!"—softly she said,
"Arouse thee, and follow—be bold—never fear;
There was danger abroad, but my errand has sped—
I promised to save thee, and lo—I am here!"

X.

He rose at the summons; but little they spoke;—
The gear of a lady she placed on his head;
She covered his limbs with a womanly cloak,
And painted his cheeks of a maidenly red.
"One kiss, my dear lord—and begone—and beware—
Walk softly—I follow! O! guide us and save
From the open assault, from the intricate snare,
Thou Providence, friend of the suffering brave!"

XI.

They passed unsuspected the guard at the cell,
And the sentinels weary that watched at the gate;
One danger remained—but they conquer'd it well—
Another—and Love triumphed still over Hate.
And long ere the morning, their ship was at sea,
Sailing down with fair winds, far away from the shore,
To the land of the Gaul, where their hearts might be free,
And the quarrels of monarchs disturb them no more.

THE SHOAL OF WHALES.

I.

CALM and unruffled is the bay,
There is not even a breath at play,
To make a ripple in the sun,
That since this summer day begun,
Has shown the Hebridean isles
A cloudless visage, bright with smiles.
On the low rocks that fringe the sea,
The brown dulse welters lazily;
The seagulls hovering, milky white,
Display their pinions to the light,
And dart and wheel with sudden cry,
Or drop like snow-flakes from the sky.

II.

The minister is in the manse,
His open Bible on his knees;
His daughters in the garden walk,
And prune their stunted apple-trees,
By high walls shelter'd from the breeze,
That comes salt-laden from the beach;
Or lift the tender floweret's stalk
Which rains have beaten to the ground;
Or guard their solitary peach
From birds, by network round.

III.

The fisher's wife beside her door
Sits mending nets, and crooning o'er
  Some old sad Gaelic lay;
And children paddle in the brine,
Or watch the fair white sails that shine
  In sunlight o'er the bay,
Or hide and seek 'mid boats that lie
Keel upwards, on the beach to dry.

IV.

Peace broods upon that Western isle;—
  When a lone fisher on the sand,
Loitering along with vacant smile,
  Suddenly stops, and with his hand
Shades his face from the light of the skies,
And summons his soul into his eyes,
To look if his sight deceives him not;—
  Lo!—there!—where sky and ocean blend!—
He fixes his gaze upon the spot—
  The glittering cascades ascend
Twenty feet high—then rustle down
On the backs of the monsters, bare and brown;
Again—and again—he sees them roll—
There are whales in the bay—A shoal! A shoal!

V.

In the fulness of his joy, his face
  Reddens—and his quick eager shout,
Echoing over that silent place,
  Calls the inquiring people out.

"The whales!" he cries—and to behold
Come the youthful and the old;
Come the feeble and the strong;
  Men and women and girls; with boys,
That whether for right, or whether for wrong,
  Delight in the tumult and the noise;
Rushing down with trampling feet,
And cries that the echoing hills repeat.

VI.

And now the uproar thicker grows—
From side to side the clapper goes
In the kirk bell, as if its power
Had been redoubled for this hour;
As if in such a cause inspired,
  It summon'd with gladness all the flock;
And flags are waved, and guns are fired,
  And bonfires kindled on the rock;
And that lone isle of the Western sea
Prepares for a day of jubilee.

VII.

"Leviathan! Leviathan!"
  The minister cries, and shuts his book;
And though a man of peace is he,
As a preacher of the Word should be,
  He takes his musket from a nook,
Rusty and old; and hastes away
To join his people in the bay.

VIII.

His daughters fair have saddled their steeds,
Two young ponies sleek and brown;
And with flashing eyes and streaming hair,
And heads uncover'd, have galloped down
To see the sport—perchance to share.
Old men have left their usual place
By warm firesides, to join the chase,
And one bedridden, half-crazy soul
Has started up at the people's roar,
And the joyous cry "a shoal! a shoal!"
And hobbled on crutches to the door,
To envy the limbs of the passers-by,
And watch the sport with kindling eye.

IX.

The women have left their spinning-wheels,
Their hose, their nets, their fishing-creels,
And arm'd themselves with pikes and staves
To follow the monsters of the waves.
Fifty boats at least are ready—
With rowers strong and helmsmen steady,
To drive the whales into shallow water,
And dye the beach with the blood of slaughter.

X.

Merrily ring the bells—
Merrily wave the flags—
Merrily shout the people
That watch upon the crags.

Merrily row the boats—
  Merrily swell the sails—
And merrily go the islanders
  To chase the mighty whales.
And quietly prays the preacher
  For a blessing and reward
Upon harpoon and musket,
  Upon the spear and sword,
That shall slay the great Leviathan,
  For the glory of the Lord.

XI.

And steady—steady—steady—
  Until their backs appear;
And ready—ready—ready—
  With the musket and the spear!
Behold the spouts upheaving,
Their sides the water cleaving—
A shot is fired—and a sudden roar
Proclaims approval on the shore;
And barb'd harpoons with lengthening twine
Are launch'd unerring o'er the brine,
And the water-spouts, that a minute ago
Were clear as the discongealing snow,
Rise ruddy in air like founts of wine;—
And the wounded whales, in their agony,
Plunge in fury through the sea,
And lash the waters into froth,
Blood-crimson'd by their pain and wrath.

XII.

In vain ye struggle—luckless whales;—
  Your numbers were a score—
But ten of you shall not escape
  To swim the salt seas more.
For ye have come to a needy land,
  And to a perilous shore,
Where they will turn your bones to wealth—
  Make coinage of your spoil,
And give their virgins when they wed
  A dowry of your oil;—
Where men will sit around their hearths,
  Reposing from their toil,
And long that every day may see
Such slaughter and such revelry.

XIII.

Again—again—the muskets ring,
And scare the sea-birds on the wing;
And not a shot is fired this day
That fails to reach its mark—and slay.
Strong hands impel the heavy spear,
  Or drive the double-edged harpoon;
And the fair bay, whose waters clear
  Were stainless underneath the moon,
Shall roll to-night a darker flood,
And see its billows streak'd with blood.

XIV.

'Tis done—the unequal strife is o'er—
The dying whales are driven ashore;

And long ere setting of the sun,
Their carcasses are haul'd to land;
Where, stretch'd unwieldy on the sand,
Men count the prizes they have won;—
Twelve monsters huge, whose bones shall bring
Enjoyment for the wintry nights,
Whose oil shall make the wretched sing,
And fill the needy with delights.
And round about the children go,
With gladness fill'd to overflow,
To hear the joyous bells resound,
And see the bonfires blazing round.

XV.

This night shall mirth be unrestrain'd,
Its blood in quicker pulses driven;
And many a flowing cup be drain'd,
And many a loving pledge be given;
And even the minister himself
Shall lay his Bible on the shelf,
And join his elders o'er a bowl
To drink a welcome to the shoal.
And every dweller in the isle
Shall hold a festival the while,
And mark in memory's tablets clear,
This day the fairest of the year.

THE WITCH OF SKERRIEVORE.

I.

"We were sisters, sisters seven—
The fairest women under heaven;
One was calm, serene, and fair—
One had locks of auburn hair—
One had lips like parted cherries—
One had cheeks like autumn berries—
One had eyes where pity glow'd—
One a smile where love abode;
Comely, ruddy, graceful, tall;
And I the fairest of them all.

II.

"Oh my sisters!—sisters sweet,
Dancing with their nimble feet,
Mingling voices all the day
In a happy roundelay,
Wreathing flowers to bind their hair,
With their smiles dispelling care,
Scattering pleasures as they went,
To the world's enravishment,
Oh my sisters! oh their fall;
Love destroy'd them one and all!

III.

"Fairest blossoms of our clime,
They were blighted ere their time:
One was sear'd by slander's breath—
One, too loving, pined to death—
One, deceived, and smitten low,
In her madness lost her woe—
One, we thought a maiden mild,
In her frenzy slew her child—
One, with hopes and passions strong,
Lived for vengeance, but not long:
I alone escaped their fall—
I alone, amid them all.

IV.

"Never have I loved a man;
Never will I—never can;
Smile, nor tear, nor passion-word
Never yet my heart has stirr'd;
Never shall they: Hate is free—
Love abides in slavery.
I have other joys than this,
Hotter pleasures, fiercer bliss,
As upon the winds I go,
Flying, floating to and fro!

V.

"Up in the air! up in the air!
In foul weather, and in fair.

I have made a compact free
With the sprites of air and sea,
To do my bidding willingly.
I can ride the fleetest wind,
And leave the lazy clouds behind,
Or swim the surf where breakers roar
Amid the rocks of Skerrievore,
Working mischief as I go,
Floating, flying to and fro!

VI.

"Up in the air! up in the air!
Before the watchman is aware,
I love to rattle the chimneys down,
And rock the belfries of the town!
Oh, 'tis sweet o'er field and copse
To rush from the barren mountain-tops,
To strip the garden of flower and fruit,
To scatter the pine-trees branch and root,
To loosen the wreaths of drifted snow,
And roll the avalanche below!

VII.

"Oh, 'tis sweet to ride the blast,
To rend the sail from the creaking mast,
To dash the billows amid the shrouds,
To hide the moon in the driving clouds,

To sweep the sailor from the deck,
And cast his ship on the rocks a wreck,
And drown his last expiring cry
In the howl of tempests rushing by!

VIII.

"Up in the air! up in the air!
I avenge my sisters fair;
On mankind I vent my wrath,
Strewing dangers in his path.
For this I've made a compact free
With the powers of air and sea,
That I shall rue eternally!
But hate is joy—and this is mine,
To ride the wind, to sail the brine,
And work fierce mischief as I go,
Floating, flying to and fro."

IX.

Ye that sail the stormy seas
Of the distant Hebrides,
By Scarba's rock, and Colonsay,
And old Iona's Minster gray,
By far Tiree, the flow'ry isle,
And Staffa's wondrous cave and pile,
By Jura, with her treble hills,
And Skye, far looming, seam'd with rills,
By barren Mull and Ulva's shore,
Beware the Witch of Skerrievore!

THE BURN OF ABERIACHAN.

I.

I LOVE, oh bonnie Aberiachan,
Thy wild and tumbling flood,
So gently down the rocks thou leapest,
So softly in thy linns thou sleepest,
Such silvery bubbles stud
Thy glancing bosom, and so green
Grows on thy back each birken bough,
I never saw a waterfall
More beautiful than thou.

II.

'Tis true, unlike thy roaring neighbour,
Thy voice is sweet and low:
The mighty Foyers speak in thunder—
Thou whisperest thy birch-trees under,
To winds that o'er thee blow;
And after showers of spring-time rain,
When every burnie bounds along,
Thy voice, so musical and soft,
But swells into a song.

III.

Yet more than Foyers, grand and solemn,
I love thy limpid face:
He awes us by his power and splendour—
Thou, like a maiden kind and tender,
Subduest by thy grace.
And in the sunny summer-time,
From morn to night, I would rejoice
To lie upon thy flowery banks,
And listen to thy voice.

IV.

Or underneath thy shelving summits,
Where tufted mosses grow—
Between the green o'erhanging birches,
Where all day long the lintie perches,
Mine idle limbs I'd throw:
And there I'd lie, until I sank
To a half-slumber, 'mid the trees,
Lull'd by thy confidential talk,
Or murmur of thy bees.

V.

Or if I woke to dreams of fancy,
Beneath thy steepest fall
I'd sit, and weave some thoughtful treasure
Into the light and airy measure,
Of chant or madrigal:—

Or haply, in some genial hour,
  Interpret into words the song
Thou singest down the mountain side,
  When autumn floods are strong—

VI.

Ev'n all the secret things thou breathest,
  From thy translucent breast,
To the high mountains cold and hoary,
Or the calm loch that, girt with glory,
  Receives thee from the west;—
Thy secret hymn of thankfulness
  For all the beauty spread around,
Upon the loch, upon the hills,
  Upon the pasture-ground.

VII.

I know thee, bonnie Aberiachan!
  I know that thou canst raise
The song of joy; and that thou flowest
With cheerful strength where'er thou goest,
  Through all thy hidden ways.—
Let me be like thee, and rejoice,
  That if no Foyers high and strong,
I still can lift a grateful voice,
  And glorify in song;

VIII.

That I can see a beauty round me,
From many an eye conceal'd;
That Nature, kind to those who love her,
Will still to them her face uncover,
And love for loving yield.
Let me, like thee, run cheerily on,
And sing my song, though none may hear;
Rewarded, if I please the few,
And keep a current clear.

ABERIACHAN, LOCH NESS,
INVERNESS-SHIRE, 1844.

THE WRAITH OF GARRY WATER.

I.

"Go, Evan! go;—the heart you swore
In weal and woe alike to cherish,
You've broken by your cold deceit,
And thrown upon the world to perish.

II.

"A woman's curse is hard to bear—
But may be turn'd, if love endeavour;
But the curse of a man with hoary hair,
It weighs upon the soul for ever.

III.

"And for the wrong that you have done,
Upon your head all sorrow gather.
And in your soul, for evermore,
Deep sink the curses of a father!"

IV.

The old man bared his gray, gray head,
And clasp'd his wither'd hands together;
And Evan curl'd his lip in scorn,
And rode his way across the heather.

V.

"Why should I heed this dotard's words?
The needle from the pole will vary—
And time will wear and hearts will change;—
I love no more his bonnie Mary.

VI.

"I trust that happy she may be,
Nor pine with sorrow overladen;
And she may love another man,
And I will love another maiden."

VII

The night was fair—the moon was up—
The wind blew low among the gowans;
Or fitful rose o'er Athol woods,
And shook the berries from the rowans.

VIII.

And Evan rode through Garry strath,
And quite forgot the old man's daughter;
And when he came to Garry stream,
It ran a red and roaring water.

IX.

The summer rains had fallen fast,
The voice of streams made music merry;
And brae-side burnies leap'd and danced,
And mingled in the tide of Garry.

X.

And Bruar raised a joyful shout,
And Tilt to Ben-Y-Gloe resounded;
And Tummel in the pride of strength,
Down to his fall, rejoicing, bounded.

XI.

Green were the birks on Garry braes,
Soft through their leaves the moon was peeping;
And 'mid the heather on the rock,
There sat a bonny maiden weeping.

XII.

Her kirtle seem'd of velvet green;
Her robes were azure, loosely flowing;
Her eyes shone bright amid her tears;
Her lips were fresh as gowans growing.

XIII.

"What brings thee here, my lily-flower?
High on the strath the storm-winds tarry;
The night is chill—the hour is late;—
Why weep'st thou by the banks of Garry?"

XIV.

The maiden raised her tearful eyes,
And with her silvery voice replying,
Said, smoothing back her yellow locks,
And speaking low and softly sighing:—

XV.

"Though dark and swift the waters pour,
Yet here I wait in dool and sorrow;
For bitter fate must I endure,
Unless I pass the stream ere morrow.

XVI.

"Oh! aid me in this deep distress,
Nor seek its causes to unravel;
My strength, alas! is weak at best,
And I am worn with toil and travel."

XVII.

"Though swift," said Evan, "is the flood,
My good bay mare is strong and steady;
So trust thee lassie to my care,
And quickly mount and make thee ready.

XVIII.

"For one glance of those eyes of blue,
Thy bonnie burden I will carry;
For one kiss of those honey lips,
I'll guide thee o'er the raging Garry.

XIX.

"What is it ails my good bay mare?
What is it makes her start and shiver?
She sees a Kelpie in the stream,
Or fears the rushing of the river.

XX.

"Ah, coward jade!—but heed her not,
For, maiden dear, we may not tarry;—
The beast has swum a swifter flood;
I'll see thee safely through the Garry."

XXI.

They mounted on the good bay mare—
But vainly Evan strove to guide her;
Through all her frame a terror crept—
She trembled at her bonnie rider.

XXII.

Then as she heard the maiden's voice,
And felt her gentle fingers pat her,
She gave a neigh as loud and shrill
As if an evil sprite had sat her.

XXIII.

And with a desperate bound she sprang
High from the bank into the current;
While sounds of laughter seem'd to mix
Amid the roaring of the torrent.

XXIV.

The waters rush'd in eddying whirls,
And dash'd the foam-drops o'er the heather;
And winds that seem'd asleep till then,
Let loose their fury altogether.

XXV.

Down—down—the awaken'd tempest blew—
And faster down the flood came pouring—
And horse and riders, overwhelm'd,
Sank 'mid the rush of waters roaring.

XXVI.

But on the surface of the flood,
Her yellow locks with spray-fall dripping,
The maiden with the kirtle green
And azure robe, came lightly tripping.

XXVII.

And now she sank, now rose again,
And dash'd the wave in rain-like shiver;
Then lay afloat, or tiptoe stood
Upon the foam-bells of the river:—

XXVIII.

And laugh'd the while, and clapp'd her hands—
Until at last the storm subsided,
When, like a gleam of parting light,
Away upon the mist she glided.

XXIX.

And Evan's corpse at morn was found,
Far down by Tummel, pale and mangled,
His features bruised by jutting rocks,
His auburn curls with gore entangled.

XXX.

Few were the mourners at his grave,
But 'mid them two—a sire and daughter;
And loud she sobb'd, and loud she wept,
Though tenderly her sire besought her.

XXXI.

"He loved me,—and he did me wrong,"
She said, "and darken'd all my morrow;
But in his grave Resentment sleeps,
While Love survives to feed on Sorrow."

THE KING'S SON.

I.

"WHY so sorrowful, my son?
Why so pallid and distress'd?
Why that look so woe-begone?
And that heaving of the breast?
Hast not wealth enough to spend
On the joys thou lovest best?"

II.

"I have wealth enough to spend—
All thy jewels and thy gold,
All that usurers could lend,
Piled before me fifty-fold,
Could not ease me of the pain
That consumes me uncontroll'd."

III.

"Could not ease thee of thy pain?
Art thou longing for the hour
When thy sire shall cease to reign,
And thine enemies shall cower?
Art thou longing for my crown,
And my sceptre and my power?"

IV.

"No!—I care not for thy crown,
Nor thy sceptre, nor thy state,
Could my wishes cast thee down,
Thou shouldst flourish high and great;
But thou'st done me mortal wrong—
And hast changed my love to hate.

V.

"Thou hast done me mortal wrong—
Thou, so feeble, old, and gray—
Thou, so weak, whilst I am strong,—
Thou hast stolen my bride away,
And art rival of thy son,
In the waning of thy day:

VI.

Art the rival of thy son
For a maid that he adored;—
Hast her trusting heart undone,
Though she wept and she implored;—
But she hates thee as do I,
Thou voluptuous—thou abhorr'd!

VII.

"But she hates thee as do I,
O thou rust upon the steel!
O thou cloud upon the sky!
O thou poison at the meal!
Who hast changed our joy to woe,
Which no time can ever heal!

VIII.

"Who hast changed our joy to woe,
Bringing blight upon her heart—
Bringing tears that, as they flow,
Burn the eyeballs where they start:
Buying beauty for a price,
Like a jewel in the mart.

IX.

"Buying beauty for a price,
When the priceless gem was mine;
When thy blood is cold as ice,
Nor can warm with love or wine,—
Trying vainly to be young,
And to kneel at beauty's shrine.

X.

"Trying vainly to be young,
When thy limbs with palsy shake,
And to woo with flattering tongue,
When for Jesus' blessed sake
Thou shouldst make thy peace with God,
Ere the grave thy body take!"

XI.

Fiercely flash'd the old king's eye—
To his forehead rush'd the blood—
And the veins were swollen high
By the anger-driven flood;
But his tongue refused to speak,
And he trembled where he stood.

XII.

But his tongue refused to speak
All the madness of his brain;
From his eyes it seem'd to reek,
On his lips it curl'd in pain;
In each feature of his face,
Swell'd in anger and disdain.

XIII.

In each feature of his face
Shone a moment, like a fire,
But no longer: from his place
Falling, conquer'd by his ire,
Senseless on the ground he lay,
Struck by apoplexy dire.

XIV.

O'er him bent his sorrowing son,
Weeping tears of bitter woe,
For the ill his words had done
To his father lying low,
With his venerable head,
And his long hair white as snow.

XV.

And that venerable head,
Burning, throbbing, up he raised
On his knees, as on a bed,
And till succour came, still gazed
On that pain-distorted cheek,
Awed, remorseful, and amazed.

XVI.

Awed, remorseful, and heart-sore,
But with courage calm and kind,
To his couch his sire he bore,
Deep repentance in his mind;
And for many a weary day
Watch'd him, patient and resign'd.

XVII.

And for many a weary day,
And for many a dreary night,
Watch'd beside him as he lay—
Senseless—speechless—hopeless quite.
Until sense, one day, return'd
Like a sudden flash of light.

XVIII.

Like a flash of light it came;
And his son beside him knelt,
Grasp'd his hand and breathed his name,
And the sorrow that he felt
Whisper'd lowly, and implored
That forgiveness might be dealt.

XIX.

Whisper'd lowly, and implored—
"Oh, forgive me, sire," he said—
"I am sad and self-abhorr'd—
I have wrong'd thine aged head,
I have mock'd thy hoary hair,
Impulse-driven and passion-led.

XX.

"I have mock'd the hoary hair
Of a sire that loved me well,
But when goaded to despair,
Youthful passion will rebel:
And I loved this lovely maid
More than tongue can ever tell.

XXI.

"God forgive me and the maid!
At her feet I breathed my sighs—
Doated on her, vow'd and pray'd—
Drew existence from her eyes,
Thought her love a light from heaven,
And her smile a paradise.

XXII.

"Thought her love a light from heaven,
And her form its purest shrine,
And my being only given
That with hers it might entwine
Heart and soul and every sense,
Mine with hers and hers with mine.

XXIII.

"Heart and soul through every sense,
One as long as life should last,
One desire, one love intense—
In one mould of fortune cast;
Undivided in our love,
E'en if life itself were past.

XXIV.

"Undivided—oh, that thought!
Thou, O father! came between,
For thy wife my bride thou sought—
Woo'd this maid to be a queen,
Never asking, in thy pride,
What her agony might mean.

XXV.

"Never asking, in thy pride,
If she loved thee!"——"Oh, my son!"
Stung with grief, the father cried,
"Pardon what thy sire has done;
Ere this night I'll give thee back
Her thou hast not lost, but won.

XXVI.

"Ere this night I'll give thee back
Her thou lovest;—as for me,
If I writhe upon the rack,
Just my punishment will be;
I was selfish in my age,
I was heartless unto thee.

XXVII.

"I was selfish in my age;—
Lustful, callous, stony-hard;
Ending life's long pilgrimage,
Swaddled in my self-regard;
Caring not, so I enjoy'd,
Whose enjoyment I debarr'd.

XXVIII.

"Caring not, so I enjoy'd,
Whom I injured, whom oppress'd,
Whose the hope that I destroy'd,
If one moment I were bless'd.
But in living to repent,
I shall die with calmer breast.

XXIX.

"And in living to repent,
Let me hasten to atone,
She for whom thy prayers are sent—
She is thine, and thine alone,
And thy love shall be to her
Better guerdon than my throne.

XXX.

"Bring her hither—let my tongue
Bless you both before I die."
He has brought her; Lo among
Chiefs and earls of lineage high,
In her loveliness array'd,
She has glided modestly.

XXXI.

In her loveliness array'd,
Downwards looking, mild and meek,
Dazzling as a star, the maid,—
Happy blushes on her cheek,—
Kneels beside the old man's bed,
Fill'd with joy she cannot speak.

XXXII.

Kneels beside the old king's bed,
Sorrow mingling with her bliss;
And he stoops his aged head,
On her forehead seals one kiss,
Takes his son's hand and the maid's,
Joins them, trembling, both in his.

XXXIII.

Clasp'd his son's hand in his own,
Then upon his pillow fell,
And his eyes one moment shone,
With a peace unspeakable,
As he died without a groan;—
Holy angels guard him well!

THE LADY OF DUART'S VENGEANCE.

[The *Florida*, one of the Invincible Armada, was sunk at Tobermory by an emissary of Queen Elizabeth. This vessel is supposed to have contained a great deal of specie. The country tradition concerning it is, that a daughter of the King of Spain having dreamed that a young man of particularly engaging figure had appeared to her, determined to sail the wide world in search of the living prototype of the vision; Maclean of Duart realized in the princess's eyes the creations of her fancy. The wife of Maclean became jealous of his attentions to the fair stranger, and sought counsel of the witches of Mull, by whose agency the vessel was sunk with the object of her resentment.—*Anderson's Guide to the Highlands.*]

I.

"Weird woman, that dwellest on lofty Ben More,
Give ear to my sorrow, and aid, I implore.
A lady has come from the green sunny bowers
Of a far southern clime, to the mountains of ours;
A light in her eyes, but deceit in her heart,
And she lingers and lingers, and will not depart.

II.

"Through darkness and danger, 'mid tempest and rain,
She has sail'd to our shores from the vineyards of Spain,
Forsaking her country, her kindred, her home,
Abroad through our cold Western islands to roam,
To find a young lover as fair to her sight
As a vision she saw in the slumbers of night.

III.

"And hither by stars inauspicious convey'd,
She has come, in her gems and her beauty array'd,
With a tongue full of sweetness—a heart insincere,
And wielding at will both the smile and the tear;
And fix'd her bright eyes on the chief of Maclean,
To toy with his heart, and bewilder his brain.

IV.

"And I, who was once the delight of his soul,
Ere *she* like a blight on my happiness stole,
Now wander through Duart, neglected and lorn,
Of a stranger the scoff—of my maidens the scorn;
With a grief in my bosom that gnaws to the core,
And a fire in my brain that will burn evermore:

V.

"Unless thou wilt aid me with charm and with spell,
To gain back the heart I have cherish'd so well,
And rid me of her who with art the most vile
Has poison'd my peace with her glozing and guile—
I hate her with hatred intense as despair!—
Yet murder's a guilt that my soul cannot bear."

VI.

"Be calm, craven spirit! On me be the guilt.
No poison shall rack her, no blood shall be spilt.

Till my hair has turn'd gray, and my blood has
grown thin,
I have dwelt on Ben More with the spirits of sin;
And have learn'd by their aid without weapons to
kill,
And can blast by a look, and destroy by my will.

VII.

"Were the good ship, the Florida, far on the seas,
I'd whirl her and toss her, like chaff on the breeze,
And far on some cliff, where the storms ever roar,
And aid could not reach them, I'd drive them
ashore;
And the wanton I'd seize by her long raven locks,
And drag her to death at the foot of the rocks.

VIII.

"But safe from all danger of winds and of tides,
In calm Tobermory at anchor she rides;
But peril may come 'mid security deep,
And vengeance may wake when the world is asleep;
And strong though her timbers—her haven secure,
The hand of Revenge, though unseen, shall be sure."

IX.

Serene was the night, and unruffled the bay,
Not a breath stirr'd the deep where the Florida lay;
Her broad azure pennant hung breezeless on high,
And her thin taper masts pointed clear to the sky;

And the moonlight that fell on the breast of the deep
Appear'd like the charm that had lull'd it to sleep.

X.

The cabin-boy dream'd of the vineyards of Spain,
Or roam'd with a maiden at sunset again;
The sailor, in fancy, was dancing afar,
In his own native land, to the graceful guitar;
Or bless'd with a household, in sleep, was restored
To the children he loved, and the wife he adored.

XI.

The fair Spanish lady in visions was blest:
She dream'd that, escaped from the isles of the West,
Her young Highland chief had consented to roam
To her far Andalusia in search of a home;
That together they dwelt in her own sunny clime,
Where life was not effort, and love was not crime.

XII.

None dream'd of the danger that round them might lurk;
But in darkness and silence a spell was at work.
Conceal'd in the waters, at poop and at prow,
The agents of evil were busy below;
And noiseless their labour, but certain their stroke,
Through her strong copper'd hull, and her timbers of oak.

XIII.

And long ere the morning, a loud sudden shriek
Was heard o'er the bay "Sprung a leak!—sprung a leak!"
Oh! then there was gathering in tumult and fear,
And a blanching of cheeks, as the peril grew near;
A screaming of women—a shouting of men,
And a rushing and trampling, again and again!

XIV.

No time for leave-taking—no leisure to weep!
In roll'd the fierce waters, and down to the deep,
Down, down fifty fathoms, with captain and crew,
The Florida sank, with the haven in view.—
Down, down to the bottom, escaping but one,
To tell the sad tale of the deed that was done.

XV.

And he, as he battled for life with the tide,
Beheld the fair lady of Spain by his side,
And a lank skinny hand, that came up through the spray,
And twined in her tresses, as floating she lay,
And heard the loud laughter of fiends in the air,
As she sank 'mid the waves with a shriek of despair.

THE BRIDGE OF GLEN ARAY.

I.

We pass'd the bridge with tramping steeds,
The waters rush'd below,
Down from the gorges of the hills
We heard the torrents flow.
But louder than the roar of streams—
We rode as hurried men,—
The foot-falls of our cavalcade
Re-echoed through the glen.

II.

We sang and shouted as we went,
Our hearts were light that day,
When near the middle of the bridge
A shrill voice bade us stay.
We saw a woman gaunt and old
Come gliding up the rocks,
With long bare arms, and shrivell'd face,
And gray dishevell'd locks.

III.

She seized my bridle suddenly,
The horse stood still with fear—
Her hand was strong and bird-like long—
Her eye was piercing clear.

"Oh shame!" she said, "oh cruel shame!
To ride so fierce and wild,
The clatter of your horses' hoofs
Will wake my little child.

IV.

"Oh hush! oh hush! I pray you, hush!
I ask no other boon—
No word be said—and softly tread—
The child will waken soon.
I die of noises all day long,
From Morn till Even-blush,
Not for my sake, but hers, I pray—
Hush! if you're Christians, hush!"

V.

Much wonder'd we to hear her words,
But Hugh, our guide, look'd on;
"Poor soul!" he said, "we'll do our best
To earn her benison.
'Twill cost no trouble to be kind:
Good Chrystie, let us through,
We will not wake your sleeping child,
But pray for her and you."

VI.

She slowly let the bridle fall—
"Ride on your way," she said—
"But oh, be silent! noise like yours
Disturbs both quick and dead."

And then she slid among the rocks;—
We saw not where she went,
But turn'd to Hugh our anxious eyes,
Inquiring what she meant.

VII.

"Poor thing!" he said, while forth we rode
As if we trod on snow,
"Her brain is turn'd by sore mischance
That happen'd long ago.
Her age was scarcely twenty then,
But what it now may be
Is somewhat difficult to fix,
Between fourscore and three.

VIII.

"Though now she's ugly as a witch,
She was a beauty then,
And with her gentleness and grace
She won the hearts of men.
And Donald Bain won hers, and sought
The hand she freely gave;—
They married; but before a year
She wept upon his grave.

IX.

"A little babe was left behind,—
A fairy thing, 'tis said,
With soft blue eyes and golden hair,
And cheeks of cherry red.

It grew in beauty every day,
The maid was two years old,
The darling of her mother's life
A pleasure to behold.

X.

"One day she wander'd to the stream—
It was the time of floods—
Perchance she chased the butterfly,
Or pluck'd the yellow buds.
She lost her footing on the brink;—
The mother heard the cry,
And sprang to save,—but all too late!
The flood ran roaring by.

XI.

"She saw the little face and hands,
Then leap'd into the foam,
To snatch it from impending death,
And bear her darling home.
In vain! in vain! oh, all in vain!
The neighbours gather'd round,
They saved the mother from the deep—
The little child was drown'd.

XII.

"And since that day—past fifty years—
She's linger'd by the stream,
And thinks the babe has gone to sleep,
And dreams a happy dream.

She fancies it will soon awake,
With blue eyes twinkling, mild—
Unchanged by half a century,
And still a little child.

XIII.

"Beside the waters where it sank
She sits the livelong day,
Her eyes upon the eddies fix'd,
That round the boulders play;
And spreads to dry upon the rocks
The clothes which it shall wear,
The little frock, the tiny shoes,
And ribbons for its hair.

XIV.

"She loves deep silence;—bless'd with that,
She feeds on empty hope,
And daily nerves a broken heart
With misery to cope.
The pitying friends who bring her food
All speak in whispers low,
And never argue with the thought
That cheers her in her woe.

XV.

"For she is harmless as a babe,
Though mad, as you may see;—
God save our senses, one and all!—"
"Amen! amen!" said we.

Such was the tale, and all that day
Such sympathy it woke,
I turn'd to chide each rising noise,
And whisper'd as I spoke.

GLEN ARAY, INVERNESS-SHIRE,
1849.

THE PLANTING OF THE ACORNS.

DARNAWAY FOREST.

I.

Upon this bare unshelter'd ground
The living germs we strew,
And pray for kindly summer suns,
And fertilizing dew.
Receive the Acorns, mother Earth,
And feed them year by year,
Till proud and high, towards the sky
Their lordly boughs they rear.
Winds, blow gently o'er them!
Rain, fall softly down!
Earth, enwrap them warmly
In thy bosom brown!

II.

Beneath the shadow of their leaves
The wanton birds shall play,
And lovers in the summer eves
Shall sigh their hearts away;

Or sit together side by side
In solitary nooks,
To read in one another's eyes
The lore not learn'd in books.
Winds, blow gently o'er them!
Stars, look kindly through!
Fortune, smile upon them,
If their love be true!

III.

And here in rural holidays,
The village girls shall sing
The simple rhymes of olden times,
While dancing in a ring.
Old men, upon the sward beneath,
Shall loiter in the sun,
With pipe and glass, and drowsy talk
Of all the deeds they've done.
Winds, blow gently o'er them!
Sunshine, gild their way!
Time, lay light thy fingers
On their heads of gray!

IV.

And when a hundred years have pass'd,
The oaks, grown old and hoar,
Shall serve to form some mighty fleet,
To guard our native shore.

By trusty hearts, in peril's hour,
Our flag shall be unfurl'd
To sound the fame of Britain's name
In thunder o'er the world.
Winds, blow gaily o'er them!
Calm thy rage, O sea!
Bear thy burden proudly
On to Victory!

THE FALL OF FOYERS,

LOCH NESS, INVERNESS-SHIRE.

I.

Wet with the spray of this transcendant river,
Upon this crag with mosses cover'd o'er,
I love to stand, and listen to the roar
Of waters bursting down the rocks for ever—
Dash'd into rainbows where the sunbeams quiver.—
The sound of billows as they beat the shore,
Or thunder leaping on the hill-tops hoar,
Till the firm earth beneath its footsteps shiver,
Is not more awful than thy flood, O Foyers!
Roaring 'mid chasms like an escaping sea.—
Alone, and silent, in thy presence vast,
Awed, yet elated, the rapt soul aspires,
Forgetting all its meaner longings past,
To hold high converse, intimate, with thee.

II.

Yes! all unmindful of the world without,
My spirit with thee, and my eyes in thrall
To thy great beauty, swathing me about,
To me 'thy voice breathes peace, majestic Fall!

Envy and pride, and warring passions all—
Hatred and scorn, and littleness of mind,
And all the mean vexations of mankind,
Fade from my spirit at thy powerful call.
I stand before thee, reverent and dumb,
And hear thy voice discoursing to my soul
Sublime orations tuned to psalmody—
High thoughts of peril met and overcome—
Of Power and Beauty and Eternity,
And the great God who bade thy waters roll!

FOYERS BEFORE THE FALL.

Ere this commotion wakens in thy breast,
Or these stern rocks call forth thy hidden powers,
How gently, Foyers, thou passest all thine hours!
Now loitering where the linnet builds its nest,
Or in green meadows where the cattle rest
Lingering, and singing to the birken bowers,
And heather-bells and all the woodland flowers
That bare their bosoms to the fragrant west.
So the great minds that soar to heights sublime,
And win in peril all the world's applause
By thoughts of wisdom and courageous deeds,
Are aye the same that, in a calmer time,
Conform them to the sweet domestic laws,
And sport with happy children in the meads.

COX AND WYMAN, PRINTERS, GREAT QUEEN-STREET.

Ballads and Lyrical Poems.

Ballads and Lyrical Poems.

THE OLD AND THE NEW.

I.

METHOUGHT on the Ægean sand
I saw a mighty Spirit stand,
Clad in his majesty alone;—
His large fair brow seem'd Wisdom's throne,
And from his face a glory shone.

II.

Another Spirit, great as he,
Stood by the far-off Northern Sea;
Erect his port, sublime his air;
Restless he seem'd, and full of care,
But godlike, and divinely fair.

III.

And though between them, as they stood,
All Europe stretch'd its plenitude
Of populous lands; and mountains cold
Raised their bare peaks, and oceans roll'd,
Each could the other's face behold.

IV.

Each could with each hold converse high,
And mingle voices in the sky;
Sounding far off, not loud, but clear,
Upon my senses—fill'd with fear—
As from some interlunar sphere.

V.

"Men," said the first, "inspired by thee,
Talk of their high philosophy;
Their skill, their science, and their laws;
Their tracing of effect to cause;
Their arts that win the world's applause;

VI.

"Their happy progress evermore,
From good to better than before;
Their new discoveries sublime;
Their knowledge spread from clime to clime;
Their triumphs over space and time.

VII.

"They vaunt their manners pure and mild,
And their religion undefiled;
While all the good that I have wrought
Is banish'd from their daily thought,
Or, if remember'd, set at nought.

VIII.

"Vain of their progress, they contemn
All arts that have not sprung from them;
And, swoll'n with pride, they cannot see,
If I were not, thou couldst not be,
And that the fruit proclaims the tree."

IX.

"Nay!" said the second! "'tis not so;
They give the reverence which they owe:
Thy memories are the theme of schools—
Thy maxims are their daily rules;
And none despise thee but the fools.

X.

"They own with wonder and with awe
Thine ancient wisdom as their law;
And that thy glories still inspire
The sweetest music of the lyre,
And steep its chords in heavenly fire;—

XI.

"That all the arts which most refine,
And make humanity divine,
Were caught from thee; and that the page
Which tells thy deeds from age to age,
Is of itself an heritage.

XII.

"That an immortal beauty girds
Thy form, and sanctifies thy words;
And that thy very name can raise
Visions that fill us with amaze,
From the abyss of former days;—

XIII.

"That mighty glimpses of the truth
Flash'd in the fancies of thy youth;
And that thy errors, darkly bright,
Were not all error, even in sight
Of those who know a purer light.

XIV.

"All this they see, but cannot own
Thou wert perfection overthrown;
Or that as Time, with onward pace,
Removed old systems from their place,
Thou wert the best for every race.

XV.

"They will not own that for the few
The toil of millions should be due—
Or that the multitudes of man,
Mere serfs and helots in thy plan,
Should groan for ever under ban;—

XVI.

"That thou shouldst grind them at thy will,
And at thy pleasure maim or kill;
Or make them build thy columns high,
Or pyramids to dare the sky;
Or force them in thy broils to die.

XVII.

"They know, though beauteous and refined,
Thou wert a scourge to human kind;
And they rejoice thy power has pass'd,
And that the time has come at last
When chains must fall, however fast;

XVIII.

"And when the many, wearied long,
Borne down by tyranny and wrong,
May lift their heads and look around,
Proud of the knowledge lately found,
They are not serfs upon the ground;

XIX.

"But freemen, heritors by birth
Of the enjoyments of the earth;
Free not alone to till the soil,
But to partake the fruits of toil—
The corn, the vintage, and the oil;

XX.

"Free not alone, as Nature meant,
To live their life, and die content;
But free to teach, and to be taught,
To read the Book with wisdom fraught,
To think—and interchange their thought."

XXI.

"Ay," said the first, "'tis brightly drawn—
Thou'st made a noontide of the dawn;
For wheresoe'er I turn mine eyes
I see a crowd of agonies—
I hear the murmurs that arise.

XXII.

"Though great thy triumphs, greater still
The aggregate of human ill;—
And narrow, narrow is the span
On which, to bless the sons of man,
The tide of effort ever ran.

XXIII.

"Look round the nations and compare—
Examine that thou mayst declare
What vast improvement has begun,
And what two thousand years have done
For those that toil beneath the sun.

XXIV.

"The people grovell'd in my prime—
They grovel in thy happier time;
And suff'ring then—they suffer now:
And if I left them slaves, hast thou
Imprinted freedom on their brow?

XXV.

"Hast thou giv'n virtue to the base,
Or flash'd thy knowledge in their face?
Hast thou convey'd to every shore
The tidings thy Messiah bore,
That Peace should reign for evermore?

XXVI.

"Hast thou, in lands supremely bless'd
With thy refinements, done thy best
To ease the ills thou canst not cure,
To teach the wretched to endure,
And shower thy blessings on the poor?"

XXVII.

"I am but young," the Spirit said;
"But yesterday I raised my head,
And late began to understand—
A mere new-comer in the land—
What was expected at my hand.

XXVIII.

"The mission unfulfill'd by thee
Has gain'd some impetus from me;
And every triumph of thy mind,
Not unforgotten for mankind,
Has been led further and refined.

XXIX.

"Though narrow yet the sphere of thought,
It has been widen'd since I wrought;
And every seed which thou hast sown
For human benefit, has grown,
And larger leaves and branches thrown,

XXX.

"Beneath my care. And though dark night
May spread a veil o'er human sight,
I see far off the dawning ray:
I labour to prepare the way,
And watch the coming of the day."

XXXI.

And as the Spirit spoke, his eyes
Flash'd heavenly fire—and to the skies
Pointing his hand he turn'd to me,
And said—"Thou dreamer, wake and see
The Paradise that earth might be!"

XXXII.

As one upon a mountain-top
Standing alone, whom mists enwrap
So densely, that he seeks in vain
Amid the cloud of sleet and rain
To see the wonders of the plain,

XXXIII.

Shouts when he sees the cloud dispersed,
And in full glory at one burst,
A world disclosed—hill, valley, town,
Glittering in sunlight miles adown—
River and lake and highlands brown ;—

XXXIV.

So I, in ecstasy and awe,
Look'd up believing, and I saw
That from mine eyes a mist was roll'd,
That heaven was bright as burnish'd gold,
And earth had visions to unfold.

XXXV.

I saw the world before me pass ;—
As in some great magician's glass
The adept sees phantasmas, dim
To all men else, but clear to him,
As in the light and shade they swim ;—

XXXVI.

So I beheld the mighty Earth
Rolling through ether; all its girth
Exhaling glory. O'er my sight
Flow'd the full tide of heavenly light,
Until the view seem'd infinite.

XXXVII.

All happy were its populous lands;
Therein no man with willing hands
Needed to pine for want of bread;
For the full banquet that was spread
Allow'd all creatures to be fed.

XXXVIII.

And toil, a burden borne by man
In sorrow since the world began,
No more his tender bones oppress'd
Until supremest joy was rest,
Or bow'd his head upon his breast.

XXXIX.

But iron servants wrought his will,—
Great engines fashion'd by his skill
For every art—to spin—to coil—
To delve the mine, to till the soil,—
And free the human race from toil.

XL.

And not alone by vapour driven,
But by the storms and calms of heaven—
By winds, however they might blow,
And by the tides in ebb or flow,
The mighty wheels went to and fro.

XLI.

The nearest and remotest lands
Were foes no more, but join'd their hands
For mutual happiness and peace;
And bade their old dissensions cease,
That they might flourish and increase.

XLII.

Too wise for bloodshed, War no more
Made demons of them as before;
Religion sow'd no poison-seed—
None wish'd his neighbour evil speed,
Or bore him malice for his creed.

XLIII.

But as I look'd with tearful eyes—
Tears sprung of joys and sympathies—
The colours of my vision grew
Many in one; and hue with hue
Was blent, and faded from my view.

XLIV.

And a still voice said to my heart—
"Though but a dream thou seest depart,
And great the load of actual ill,
Hope in thy waking—labour still—
Deeds are fruition of the will.

XLV.

"The smallest effort is not lost;—
Each wavelet on the ocean toss'd
Aids in the ebb-tide or the flow;
Each rain-drop makes some flow'ret blow,
Each struggle lessens human woe."

THE COMING TIME.

"What shall I do to be for ever known,
And make the age to come mine own?"
COWLEY.

WHAT thou shalt do to be for ever known?
Poet or statesman—look with steadfast gaze,
And see yon giant *Shadow* 'mid the haze,
Far off, but coming. Listen to the *moan*
That sinks and swells in fitful under-tone,
And lend it words, and give the shadow form;—
And see the *Light*, now pale and dimly shown
That yet shall beam resplendent after storm.
Preach thou their coming, if thy soul aspire
To be the foremost in the ranks of fame;—
Prepare the way, with hand that will not tire,
And tongue unfaltering, and o'er earth proclaim
The *Shadow*, the ROUSED MULTITUDE;—the *Cry*,
"JUSTICE FOR ALL!"—the *Light*, TRUE LIBERTY.

TUBAL CAIN.

I.

OLD Tubal Cain was a man of might
In the days when earth was young;
By the fierce red light of his furnace bright
The strokes of his hammer rung;
And he lifted high his brawny hand
On the iron glowing clear,
Till the sparks rush'd out in scarlet showers,
As he fashion'd the sword and spear.
And he sang—"Hurra for my handiwork!
Hurra for the Spear and Sword!
Hurra for the hand that shall wield them well,
For he shall be king and lord!"

II.

To Tubal Cain came many a one,
As he wrought by his roaring fire,
And each one pray'd for a strong steel blade
As the crown of his desire;
And he made them weapons sharp and strong,
Till they shouted loud for glee,
And gave him gifts of pearls and gold,
And spoils of the forest free.
And they sang—"Hurra for Tubal Cain,
Who hath given us strength anew!
Hurra for the smith, hurra for the fire,
And hurra for the metal true!"

III.

But a sudden change came o'er his heart
Ere the setting of the sun,
And Tubal Cain was fill'd with pain
For the evil he had done;
He saw that men, with rage and hate,
Made war upon their kind,
That the land was red with the blood they shed
In their lust for carnage, blind.
And he said—"Alas! that ever I made,
Or that skill of mine should plan,
The spear and the sword for men whose joy
Is to slay their fellow-man!"

IV.

And for many a day old Tubal Cain
Sat brooding o'er his woe;
And his hand forbore to smite the ore,
And his furnace smoulder'd low.
But he rose at last with a cheerful face,
And a bright courageous eye,
And bared his strong right arm for work,
While the quick flames mounted high.
And he sang—"Hurra for my handiwork!"
And the red sparks lit the air;
"Not alone for the blade was the bright steel made;"
And he fashion'd the First Ploughshare!

V.

And men, taught wisdom from the Past,
In friendship join'd their hands,
Hung the sword in the hall, the spear on the wall,
And plough'd the willing lands;
And sang—"Hurra for Tubal Cain!
Our stanch good friend is he;
And for the ploughshare and the plough
To him our praise shall be.
But while Oppression lifts its head,
Or a tyrant would be lord,
Though we may thank him for the Plough,
We'll not forget the Sword!"

THE FOUNDING OF THE BELL.*

I.

Hark! how the furnace pants and roars,
Hark! how the molten metal pours,
As, bursting from its iron doors,
It glitters in the sun.
Now through the ready mould it flows,
Seething and hissing as it goes,
And filling every crevice up
As the red vintage fills the cup:
Hurra! the work is done!

* When this Ballad was written, the author had not read Schiller's poem on the same subject; or it is possible—and most probable—that he would not have incurred the formidable risk of a comparison.

II.

Unswathe him now. Take off each stay
That binds him to his couch of clay,
And let him struggle into day:
Let chain and pulley run,
With yielding crank and steady rope,
Until he rise from rim to cope,
In rounded beauty, ribb'd in strength,
Without a flaw in all his length:
Hurra! the work is done!

III.

The clapper on his giant side
Shall ring no peal for blushing bride,
For birth, or death, or new-year tide,
Or festival begun!
A nation's joy alone shall be
The signal for his revelry;
And for a nation's woes alone
His melancholy tongue shall moan:
Hurra! the work is done!

IV.

Borne on the gale, deep-toned and clear,
His long loud summons shall we hear,
When statesmen to their country dear
Their mortal race have run;
When mighty monarchs yield their breath,
And patriots sleep the sleep of death,
Then shall he raise his voice of gloom,
And peal a requiem o'er their tomb:
Hurra! the work is done!

V.

Should foemen lift their haughty hand,
And dare invade us where we stand,
Fast by the altars of our land
We'll gather every one:
And he shall ring the loud alarm,
To call the multitudes to arm,
From distant field and forest brown,
And teeming alleys of the town:
Hurra! the work is done!

VI.

And as the solemn boom they hear,
Old men shall grasp the idle spear,
Laid by to rust for many a year,
And to the struggle run;
Young men shall leave their toils or books,
Or turn to swords their pruning-hooks;
And maids have sweetest smiles for those
Who battle with their country's foes:
Hurra! the work is done!

VII.

And when the cannon's iron throat
Shall bear the news to dells remote,
And trumpet-blast resound the note,
That victory is won:
When down the wind the banner drops,
And bonfires blaze on mountain-tops,
His sides shall glow with fierce delight,
And ring glad peals from morn to night:
Hurra! the work is done!

VIII.

But of such scenes forbear to tell—
May never War awake this bell
To sound the tocsin or the knell;—
Hush'd be the alarum gun;—
Sheath'd be the sword! and may his voice
But call the nations to rejoice
That War his tatter'd flag has furl'd,
And vanish'd from a wiser world.
Hurra! the work is done!

IX.

Still may he ring when struggles cease,
Still may he ring for joy's increase,
For progress in the arts of peace,
And friendly trophies won.
When rival nations join their hands,
When plenty crowns the happy lands,
When knowledge gives new blessings birth,
And freedom reigns o'er all the earth.
Hurra! the work is done!

LIFE'S COMPANIONS.

I.

WHEN I set sail on Life's young voyage,
'Twas upon a stormy sea:
But to cheer me night and day,
Through the perils of the way,
With me went companions three—
Three companions kind and faithful,
True as friend and dear as bride;
Heedless of the stormy weather,
Hand in hand they came together,
Ever smiling at my side.

II.

One was HEALTH, my lusty comrade,
Cherry-cheek'd and stout of limb;
Though my board was scant of cheer,
And my drink but water clear,
I was thankful, bless'd with him:
One was mild-eyed PEACE OF SPIRIT,
Who, though storms the welkin swept,
Waking gave me calm reliance,
And though tempests howl'd defiance,
Smooth'd my pillow when I slept.

III.

One was HOPE, my dearest comrade,
Never absent from my breast,
Brightest in the darkest days,
Kindest in the roughest ways,
Dearer far than all the rest.

And though Wealth, nor Fame, nor Station,
  Journey'd with me o'er the sea,
Stout of heart, all danger scorning,
Nought cared I in Life's young morning
  For their lordly company.

IV.

But, alas! ere night has darken'd,
  I have lost companions twain;
And the third, with tearful eyes,
Worn and wasted, often flies,
  But as oft returns again.
And, instead of those departed,
  Spectres twain around me flit;
Pointing each, with shadowy finger,
Nightly at my couch they linger;
  Daily at my board they sit.

V.

Oh, that I so blindly follow'd
  In the hot pursuit of Wealth!
Though I've gain'd the prize of gold,
Eyes are dim, and blood is cold—
  I have lost my comrade, HEALTH.
CARE instead, the wither'd beldam,
  Steals th' enjoyment from my cup:
Hugs me, that I cannot quit her;
Makes my choicest morsels bitter;
  Seals the founts of pleasure up.

VI.

Woe is me that Fame allured me—
She so false, and I so blind!
Sweet her smiles, but in the chase
I have lost the happy face
Of my comrade PEACE OF MIND;
And instead, REMORSE, pale phantom,
Tracks my feet where'er I go;
All the day I see her scowling,
In my sleep I hear her howling,
Wildly flitting to and fro.

VII.

Last of all my dear companions,
HOPE! sweet Hope! befriend me yet.
Do not from my side depart,
Do not leave my lonely heart
All to darkness and regret.
Short and sad is now my voyage
O'er this gloom-encompass'd sea,
But not cheerless altogether,
Whatsoe'er the wind and weather,
Will it seem, if bless'd with thee.

VIII.

Dim thine eyes are, turning earthwards,
Shadowy pale, and thin thy form:—
Turn'd to Heaven thine eyes grow bright,
All thy form expands in light,
Soft and beautiful and warm.

Look then upwards! lead me heavenwards!
  Guide me o'er this dark'ning sea!
Pale Remorse shall fade before me,
And the gloom shall brighten o'er me,
  If I have a friend in *Thee*.

CASTLES IN THE AIR.

I.

I LOVE to lie in leafy woods,
  When summer days grow long,
    To hear the fall
    Of brooklets small,
  Or blackbirds' mellow song:
To watch the dapple clouds afloat,
  And trace upon the sky,
    In hues of light,
    All golden bright,
  A thousand castles high.
Stay, O Truth! thy hand relentless,
  And, I prithee, spare
My bowers of Bliss—so beautiful—
  My castles in the air.

II.

In one abides unchanging Love;—
  No guile is on his tongue,
    His heart is clear,
    His vow sincere,
  His passion ever young:

And Care and Penury and Pain
Are powerless to destroy
His early heat,
Communion sweet,
And still recurring joy.
Smooth, O Truth! thy brow majestic,
And in pity spare
My bower of Love so beautiful—
My castle in the air.

III.

True Friendship, in my sky-built halls,
Her presence has bestow'd;
Each airy dome
Is Virtue's home,
And Honour's own abode;
And there they flourish evermore,
And twine together still,
Though fortune blind,
And men unkind,
Conspire to work them ill.
Prithee, Truth, look down auspicious,
Stay thine hand, and spare
My bower, for Faith and Friendship built—
My castle in the air.

IV.

The statesmen, governors, and kings,
That in my mansions dwell,
Desire not pelf,
Nor think of self,
But love their country well.

They give to Merit just reward,
To Guilt befitting shame,
And shower on worth,
And not on birth,
The dignities of fame.
Truth, I prithee, stay thine anger,
And my buildings spare,
My bowers for Public Virtue built—
My castles in the air.

V.

Smile on them, Truth! behold how bright
They glitter in the skies.
Behold how proud,
O'er mist and cloud,
Their golden turrets rise.
But no! thou frownest, and in vain
Thine angry looks I shun:
My castles tall
Down crumbling fall,
Like ice-drops in the sun.
Thou hast destroy'd my visions lovely,
All my mansions fair,
My bowers of Bliss—so beautiful—
My castles in the air.

A CANDID WOOING.

I.

I CANNOT give thee all my heart,
Lady, lady—
My faith and country claim a part,
My sweet lady:
But yet I'll pledge thee word of mine
That all the rest is truly thine.
The raving passion of a boy,
Warm though it be, will quickly cloy—
Confide thou rather, in the man
Who vows to love thee all he can,
My sweet lady.

II.

Affection, founded on respect,
Lady, lady,
Can never dwindle to neglect,
My sweet lady.
And while thy gentle virtues live,
Such is the love that I will give.
The torrent leaves its channel dry;
The brook runs on incessantly:
The storm of passion lasts a day,
But deep true love endures alway,
My sweet lady.

III.

Accept then a divided heart,
Lady, lady.
Faith, Friendship, Honour—each have part,
My sweet lady.
While at one altar we adore,
Faith shall but make us love the more;
And Friendship, true to all beside,
Will ne'er be fickle to a bride;
And Honour, based on manly truth,
Shall love in age as well as youth,
My sweet lady.

THE VOICE OF THE TIME.

I.

Day unto day utters speech—
Be wise, O ye nations! and hear
What yesterday telleth to-day,
What to-day to the morrow will preach.
A change cometh over our sphere,
And the old goeth down to decay.
A new light hath dawn'd on the darkness of yore,
And men shall be slaves and oppressors no more.

II.

Hark to the throbbing of thought,
In the breast of the wakening world :—
Over land, over sea, it hath come.
The serf that was yesterday bought,
To-day his defiance hath hurl'd,
No more in his slavery dumb ;
And to-morrow will break from the fetters that bind,
And lift a bold arm for the rights of mankind.

III.

Hark to the voice of the time !
The multitude think for themselves,
And weigh their condition, each one.
The drudge has a spirit sublime,
And whether he hammers or delves,
He reads when his labour is done ;
And learns, though he groan under penury's ban,
That freedom to think is the birthright of man.

IV.

But yesterday thought was confined ;
To breathe it was peril or death,
And it sank in the breast where it rose ;—
Now, free as the midsummer wind,
It sports its adventurous breath,
And round the wide universe goes ;
The mist and the cloud from its pathway are curl'd,
And glimpses of glory illumine the world.

V.

The voice of opinion has grown :
'Twas yesterday changeful and weak,
Like the voice of a boy ere his prime ;
To-day it has taken the tone
Of an orator worthy to speak,
Who knows the demands of the time ;
And to-morrow 'twill sound in Oppression's cold ear
Like the trump of the seraph to startle our sphere.

VI.

Be wise, O ye rulers of earth !
And shut not your ears to the voice,
Nor allow it to warn you in vain ;
True freedom, of yesterday's birth,
Will march on its way and rejoice,
And never be conquer'd again.
The day has a tongue—ay, the hours utter speech—
Wise, wise will ye be, if ye learn what they teach !

THE CRY OF THE PEOPLE — 1845.

(BEFORE THE REPEAL OF THE CORN LAWS.)

I.

Our backs are bow'd with the exceeding weight
Of toil and sorrow; and our pallid faces
Shrivel before their time. Early and late
We labour in our old accustom'd places,
Beside our close and melancholy looms,
Or wither in the coal-seams dark and dreary,
Or breathe sick vapours in o'ercrowded rooms,
Or in the healthier fields dig till we weary,
And grow old men ere we have reach'd our prime,
With scarce a wish, but death, to ask of Time.

II.

For it is hard to labour night and day,
With sleep-defrauded eyes and temples aching,
To earn the scanty crust, which fails to stay
The hunger of our little ones, that waking
Weep for their daily bread. 'Tis hard to see
The flow'rets of our household fade in sadness,
In the dank shadow of our misery.
'Tis hard to have no thought of human gladness,
But one engrossing agony for bread,
To haunt us at our toil, and in our bed.

III.

And many of us, worn with age and pain—
Old wither'd leaves of men, who, fading, cumber,
Long for that pleasant fosse, six feet by twain,
Impervious to all grief, where we may slumber.
And others of us, more unhappy still,
Youthful, warm-blooded, with a life to cherish,
Offer in vain our sinews and our skill
For starving recompense, and yet must perish
In our young days, and on a fruitful soil,
Because our food is dearer than our toil.

IV.

'Tis hard to know that the increase of wealth
Makes us no richer, gives us no reliance;
And that while ease, and luxury, and health
Follow the footsteps of advancing science,
They shower no benefits on us, cast out
From the fair highways of the world, to wander
In dark paths darkly groping still about,
And at each turn condemn'd to rest, and ponder
If living be the only aim of life—
Mere living, purchased by perpetual strife.

V.

We rise in grief—in grief lie down again;
And whither to turn for aid in our deep anguish
We know not—yet we feel that we are men,
Born to live out our days—and not to languish

As if we had no souls; as if, stone-blind,
We knew not spring was fair; and that the summer
Ripen'd the fruits of earth with influence kind;
That harvest ought to be a welcome comer
To us and ours; and that in Nature's face,
Were smiles of joy for all the human race.

VI.

We ask not much. We have no dread of toil;—
Too happy we, if labour could provide us,
Even though we doubled all our sweat and moil,
Raiment and food—and shelt'ring roofs to hide us
From the damp air, and from the winter's cold;—
If we could see our wives contented round us,
And to our arms our little children fold,
Nor fear that next day's hunger should confound us.
With joys like these, and one sweet day of rest,
We would complain no more, but labour, bless'd.

VII.

But these we sigh for all our days in vain,
And find no remedy where'er we seek it;—
Some of us, reckless, and grown mad with pain
And hungry vengeance, have broke loose to
wreak it:—
Have made huge bonfires of the hoarded corn,
And died despairing. Some to foreign regions,
Hopeless of this, have sail'd away forlorn,
To find new homes and swear a new allegiance.
But we that stay'd behind had no relief,
No added corn, and no diminish'd grief.

VIII.

And rich men kindly urge us to endure,
  And they will send us clergymen to bless us;
And lords who play at cricket with the poor,
  Think they have cured all evils that oppress us.
And then we think endurance is a crime;
  That those who wait for justice never gain it;
And that the multitudes are most sublime
  When, rising arm'd, they combat to obtain it,
And dabbling in thick gore, as if 'twere dew,
Seek not alone their rights, but vengeance too.

IX.

But these are evil thoughts; for well we know,
  From the sad history of all times and places,
That fire, and blood, and social overthrow,
  Lead but to harder grinding of our faces
When all is over: so, from strife withdrawn,
  We wait in patience through the night of sorrow,
And watch the far-off glimpses of the dawn
  That shall assure us of a brighter morrow.
And meanwhile, from the overburden'd sod,
Our cry of anguish rises up to God.

A LOVER'S LOGIC.

I.

I AM skill'd in magic lore,
And can tell thee, dearest maiden,
What the winds at evening say,
As amid the boughs they play;—
What the river to its shore,
Softly whispers evermore
From its heart o'erladen.

II.

I can tell thee how the moon
Breathes persuasion to the billows;
What discourse the mountain makes
To its shadow-loving lakes;
And conceal'd in lonely nooks
What the little devious brooks
Murmur to the willows.

III.

"Love thou me—for I love thee,"
Is the song they sing for ever.
At this moment I can hear
The responses ringing clear;
And the very stars repeat
To the moon an answer sweet—
"Love shall perish never."

IV.

And if thus Earth, Sea, and Sky
Find a voice to sing their passion,
Should we fail, my dearest maid,
Wandering in this greenwood shade,
To repeat the same sweet song,
We should do their music wrong,
And be out of fashion.

REAL AND IDEAL.

A FRAGMENT.

I.

Two friends were sitting in a chamber fair,
Hung round with pictures, and in every nook
Fill'd with choice tomes and busts and marbles rare.
One sat apart—and one with listless look
Turn'd o'er, unread, the pages of a book;
Both young—and one who seem'd with sadness fraught,
Thus to the other breathed his secret thought.

II.

"I'm weary, Basil, of this ceaseless din:—
The world hath beat against my heart, and worn
By the rude contact of its vice and sin,
The purity and freshness of its morn;—
Tutor'd in callousness, adept in scorn,
Virtue and Friendship, Honour, Love, and Fame,
Are things to me no more, each dwindled to a name

III.

"I'm weary of the world, and daily sigh
For some green resting-place—some forest cave,
Guarded by distance from the intruding eye
Of civil fool and sycophantic knave—
With none to flatter me, and cringe and crave
For driblets of the gold which I despise,
And all who ask it with their fawning eyes.

IV.

"I'm weary of this pomp and ceaseless thrall,
And pine for peace in wild woods far away;
Though gold the fetters, still they chafe and gall;
Though jewel-hilted, still the sword will slay;
Though set with diamonds of the richest ray,
The glittering cup that held the poison-draught
Provides no antidote to him who quaff'd.

V.

"I will away, and hide me in a bower;—
Or roam the forest, climb the mountain-peak,
Or muse by waterfalls at evening's hour,
Or count the blushes on the morning's cheek,
Or in deep silence of the midnight, seek
Communion with the stars, that I may know
How petty is this ball on which we come and go.

VI.

"That I may learn what maggots on a crust
Are men on earth; and then, perchance, I may
Find some revival of forgotten trust,
Some flower of faith fast fading to decay.—
Here in these hollow crowds, heart-sick I stray,
And find a void—and all my days I grieve
That nothing more is left me to believe.

VII.

"Love?—It is bought for miserable gold.
The fairest creature that the earth e'er saw,—
Fashion'd in beauty's most delicious mould,
Modest, accomplish'd, pure without a flaw,
Would sell herself, with proper form of law,
For half my wealth; or ogle to trepan
A Negro Crœsus, or a Mussulman.

VIII.

"Friendship?—Like midges on a beam, the horde
Throng numberless; and every man pretends
My virtues only lure him to my board—
He hath no selfish interest, no ends
To serve but mine. Oh kind, oh generous friends!
What would ye do should all the ducats fail?—
Fail too—dissolving like the summer hail.

IX.

"Fame?—It is pleasant—but alas! not worth
The panting and the toiling to acquire.
Is any object on this paltry earth
So great, that man should waste his soul of fire,
And carry in his heart the fierce desire
For threescore years, then die without the prize,
Which fools, meantime, have snatched before his eyes?

X.

"What is there left? Long studied in the schools
Of doubt and disbelief, my faith is dead:
I've measured God by algebraic rules,
And in a maze of logic long misled,
Having no faith, have set up Chance instead;
Sought refuge in denial, to revolve
No more the problem which I cannot solve.

XI.

"I'm weary, weary, and would be alone,
Away from cities and their stifling crowd,
Far from the scenes where folly on her throne,
For rich and poor, for simple and for proud,
Utters her laws and proclamations loud.
I'm weary—and will hence, and hide in woods,
And feed on quiet in their solitudes."

XII.

'What?" said his friend—"Thou, Julian! steep'd
in wealth,
The young, the handsome, and the nobly born,
Endow'd with choicest gifts of strength and health—
Dost thou indulge this misanthropic scorn,
And rail at Fortune in thy youth's fair morn?
And turn disgusted from enjoyment's cup,
With its rich liquor bubbling ever up?

XIII.

"Arouse thee from this lethargy of soul—
Shake off the weight that bears thy spirit down—
'Tis but the offspring of the extra bowl
We drain'd last night. Smooth from thy brow
the frown.
There hangs a gloom on the expectant town
When thou art sad:—Come, be thyself again,
Nor with the lore of fools bedull thy brain.

XIV.

"Hear my philosophy, and weigh with thine
The truer wisdom that my tongue shall teach:—
Not ever shall our noon of manhood shine,
Nor pleasure woo us with entrancing speech;
Not ever shall our arms have power to reach
The golden fruit, that hangs on every bough,
In the fair garden where we wander now.

XV.

"Short on the earth is our allotted time,
And short our leisure to lament and weep;
Nature, all bounteous, deems denial crime,
And sows a harvest for the wise to reap.
So fill the goblet high—but drain not deep;
And if at morn you toil, at evening rest—
To-day's denial is to-morrow's zest.

XVI.

"Be temperate only to enjoy the more—
So shall no dainty on thy palate pall;
And cease with fools and bigots to deplore
That earth's no heaven, and man not perfect all:
Still make the best of whatsoe'r befall,
Nor rail at fortune, though the jade is blind,
Nor launch thy bitter scorn on human kind.

XVII.

"Hope little—thou wilt be the less deceived—
In Love and Friendship be thy rule the same:
And if by Julia's cruelty aggrieved,
At Laura's altar light another flame,—
And if she scorn thee, swear by Dora's name;—
[redacted]to either with so fond a heart
[redacted]d cause thee half a pang to part.

XVIII.

"For passion is the bane of mortal bliss,
The flame that scorches—not the ray that cheers;
nd every tragedy but teaches this—
Who sows in passion, reaps in blood and tears;
And he who to his soul too much endears
The sweetest, best, and fairest of her kind,
But makes a despot to enthral his mind.

XIX.

"Nor let thy savage virtue take offence
If friends should love thee better rich than poor;—
It may be feeling, but it is not sense—
Ripeness of heart, but judgment immature—
To look for friendship that shall aye endure;
Or think the lamp would show the same bright ray
Should the oil fail, and riches melt away.

XX.

"Nor let desire of Fame perplex thy thought—
Poor are the objects that Ambition seeks.
The applause of dunces is too dearly bought
By nerveless limbs, care-deaden'd eyes, and cheeks
Furrow'd before their time by aged streaks;
And the true wisdom never stops to weigh
A shadowy Morrow with a real To-day.

XXI.

"Enjoy the present—gild the passing hour—
Nor drain the cup;—nor fill it to the brim;—
For us shall Beauty open wide her bower,
And sparkling eyes in tender languor swim;
For us shall joy awake the jubilant hymn;
And round us gather every young delight
That wealth can buy, for taste, or touch, or sight."

XXII.

"No, Basil, no—I pine for a belief;
I'm wearied with my doubts, and fain would rest.
Long have I clutch'd, in bitterness and grief,
At all these phantoms, beautifully drest
In colours brighter than the rainbow's vest.
No, my friend Basil—not in these I trust,
Begun in folly, ending in disgust.

XXIII.

"My soul, long darken'd, languishes for light—
And with an utterance labours night and day.
I see a vision dawning on my sight,
I hear a music faint and far away—
I hear a voice which says, 'Not all of clay
Thy mortal being—raise thyself, O clod!
Look up, O finite, infinite in God.'

XXIV.

"Oh, that I could believe! oh, that my soul
Could trust in something, and my weary mind
Burst all unfetter'd from the dull control
Of doubt, that thinks it sees, but still is blind!
That I could cling to some one of my kind—
Some gentle soul whose love might be the ray
To lead me to belief, and brighten all the way.

XXV.

"Faith shall be born of Love—oh, happy pair!
Would ye but smile upon my darkening road,
No more my heart, imprison'd by despair,
Should find its sympathies too great a load,
Doubtful alike of self, of kind, of God.—
I will away from all this pomp and jar,
And commune with my soul in solitudes afar."

* * * *

HEAD AND HEART.

AN UNDECIDED DISPUTE.

I.

Said Head to Heart, "You lead me wrong:
The pulse of passion beats too strong.
You are the dupe of tears and sighs;
You take the Judgment by surprise;

II.

"You melt at every sorrowing tale,
Let Feeling over Will prevail;
And still, by impulse led astray,
You draw me from the prudent way.

III.

"When I would walk a steady pace;
Impetuous, you would run a race;
And ere a doubtful case I've tried,
You've prompted Pity to decide.

IV.

"By bounds of Reason unconfined,
No space your sympathies can bind;
For, wayward as a petted child,
You scorn restraint, and wander wild.

V.

"I pray you, Heart, these freaks forbear;
They cause me shame, they breed me care;
And I am blamed for going wrong,
And counted weak that you are strong."

VI.

Said Heart to Head, "You're cold and slow;
You cast a damp on Feeling's glow;
You are like water on the fire;
You are a clog on my desire.

VII.

"You measure Passion by a rule,
You send the sympathies to school,
And, slave to logic and its laws,
You weigh, you ponder, and you pause.

VIII.

"When I would prompt the pitying tear,
You purse the lip and look severe,
And quick to doubt and slow to grieve,
You lecture when you should relieve.

IX.

"Oh! it is galling to be tied
To one so sluggish to decide,
Who chills me when I glow'd before,
And clings to earth when I would soar."

X.

The silent contest lasted long,
For both were right;—yet both were wrong.
"Strive," to my secret soul I said,
"To reconcile the Heart and Head.

XI.

"And let the Heart too warm and free,
Too sudden in its energy,
Pause for the advice of cooler Tact,
And learn to think before it act.

XII.

"Let Head, too prone to reason still,
Even in extremity of ill,
Consent to play a warmer part,
Led by the dictates of the Heart."

LITTLE FOOLS AND GREAT ONES.

I.

When at the social board you sit,
And pass around the wine,
Remember, though abuse is vile,
That use may be divine:
That Heaven, in kindness, gave the grape
To cheer both great and small—
That little fools will drink too much,
But great ones not at all.

II.

And when in youth's too fleeting hours
You roam the earth alone,
And have not sought some loving heart
That you may make your own:—
Remember woman's priceless worth,
And think, when pleasures pall—
That little fools will love too much,
But great ones not at all.

III.

And if a friend deceived you once,
Absolve poor human kind,
Nor rail against your fellow-man
With malice in your mind;

But in your daily intercourse,
  Remember, lest you fall—
That little fools confide too much,
  But great ones not at all.

IV.

In weal or woe be trustful still;
  And in the deepest care
Be bold and resolute, and shun
  The coward foe Despair.
Let work and hope go hand in hand;
  And know, whate'er befall—
That little fools may hope too much,
  But great ones not at all.

V.

In work or pleasure, love or drink,
  Your rule be still the same—
Your work not toil, your pleasure pure,
  Your love a steady flame;
Your drink not maddening, but to cheer;—
  So shall your bliss not pall,
For little fools enjoy too much,
  But great ones not at all.

LOST AND WON.

I.

An idler, on the shady sward extended,
Lay listless on a summer's afternoon:
Thick boughs and numerous leaves above him blended
Into an arch, through which the beams were strewn
Upon the grass, like ripples on a river;
There was a sleepy loveliness around,
The quiet winds scarce caused the leaves to quiver,
And vagrant bees flew by with drowsy sound.

II.

Too full of life for sleep—too calm for waking,
The place seem'd fit for dreamer such as he,
Who, worldly thoughts and haunts of men forsaking,
Resign'd himself to lazy luxury.
His thoughts were shapeless as the winds, and wander'd
Afar in cloud-land, void of all intent;
His eyes now closed, as if on self he ponder'd,
Now open to the leaves and firmament.

III.

Waking or sleeping, or if day or morrow,
He knew not—but he saw seven ladies fair
Beside him, with pale cheeks and looks of sorrow,
And tearful eyes and long dishevell'd hair:

He knew them, and a deep remorse came o'er him,
A shame of self that he had done them wrong;
While with reproachful looks they stood before him,
And one broke forth into this mournful song:—

IV.

"Listen," she said, "and hear the wrong thou'st done us,
And the false deeds thou'st wrought against thy soul;
The summer winds shall breathe no more upon us,
We're gone—our place is fill'd—we've reach'd the goal.
Our melancholy faces look not sunward,
But back in shadow; and, oh! never more
Can we return to thee to help thee onward,
And bring thee gladness as we brought before.

V.

"We stay'd with thee long time, with power to aid thee,
Hadst thou but struggled with an earnest mind,
To do such noble deeds as might have made thee
Stand in the foremost ranks of human kind.
We could have fill'd thy cup to overflowing,
If worldly Wealth found favour in thy sight;
If Fame inspired, we could have led thee glowing
Up the steep summit, to her topmost height.

VI.

"If Love of Knowledge fired thee to pursue her,
We could have help'd thee to her courts to climb—
Smooth'd the rough pathway—lent thee words to woo her,
And turn'd the pages of her book sublime.
If to be virtuous were thy sole ambition,
We, day by day, had taught thee to excel;
Led thee to raise the wretched from perdition,
And brought their blessings to reward thee well.

VII.

"All this, and more, if thou hadst duly prized us,
For thee, life-waster, could our aid have done;
But thou hast scorn'd, neglected, and despised us,
And we are powerless, and our course is run.
We are but shadows, pallid and regretful,
To whom no future can a form restore;
And bearing with us, from thy soul forgetful,
The fair occasions that return no more."

VIII.

Thus as she spake, his face in shame he cover'd;
And when he look'd again, he was alone.
"DEPARTED YEARS, whose memory round me hover'd,
For all the Past the Future shall atone,"
He said—and rising, cast away for ever
The philosophic sloth that bound his soul;
Mix'd with mankind, and, strong with wise endeavour,
Toil'd up the hill of Fame, and reach'd the goal.

THE DEATH OF PAN.

Behold the vision of the death of Pan.—
I saw a shadow on the mountain-side,
As of a Titan wandering on the cliffs;
Godlike his stature, but his head was bent
Upon his breast, in agony of woe;
And a voice rose upon the wintry wind,
Wailing and moaning—"Weep, ye nations, weep!
Great Pan is dying:—mourn me, and lament!
My steps shall echo on the hills no more;
Dumb are mine oracles—my fires are quench'd,
My doom is spoken, and I die—I die!"

The full moon shone upon the heaving sea,
And in the light, with tresses all unbound,
Their loose robes dripping, and with eyes downcast,
The nymphs arose, a pallid multitude,
Lovely but most forlorn; and thus they sang,
With voice of sorrow—"Never—never more,
In these cool waters shall we lave our limbs;—
Never, oh never more! in sportive dance
Upon these crested billows shall we play;—
Nor at the call of prayer-o'erburden'd men
Appear in answer; for our hour is come;
Great Pan has fallen, and we die! we die!"

Emerging slowly from the trackless woods,
And from the umbrageous caverns of the hills,

Their long hair floating on the rough cold winds,
Their faces pale, their eyes suffused with tears,
The Dryads and the Oreads made their moan :—
"Never, oh never more!" distraught, they cried,
"Upon the mossy banks of these green woods
Shall we make music all the summer's day ;—
Never again, at morn or noon or night,
Upon the flowery sward, by fount or stream,
Shall our light footsteps mingle in the dance ;—
Never again, discoursing from the leaves
And twisted branches of these sacred oaks,
Shall we make answer at a mortal's call!
Our hour is come, our fire of life is quench'd ;
Our voices fade ; our oracles are mute ;
Behold our agony ;—we die! we die!"
And as they sang, their unsubstantial forms
Grew pale and lineless, and dispersed in air ;
While from the innermost and darkest nooks,
Deepest embower'd amid those woods antique,
A voice most mournful echo'd back their plaint,
And cried—"*Oh Misery! they die! they die!*"

Then pass'd a shadow o'er the moon's pale disc ;
And to the dust, in ecstasy of awe,
I bent adoring. On the mountain-tops
Thick darkness crept, and silence deep as death'
Pervaded Nature : the wind sank—the leaves
Forbore to flutter on the bending boughs,
And breathing things were motionless as stones,
As earth, revolving on her mighty wheel,
Eclipsed in utter dark the lamp of Heaven ;

And a loud voice, amid that gloom sublime,
Was heard from shore to sea, from sea to shore,
Startling the nations at the unwonted sound,
And swelling on the ear of mariners.
Far tossing on their solitary barks,
A month's long voyage from the nearest land—
"*Great Pan has fallen, for ever, ever more!*"

The shadow pass'd—light broke upon the world;
And Nature smiled, rejoicing in the beam
Of a new morning blushing from the East;
And sounds of music seem'd to fill the air,
And angel voices to exclaim on high,
"Great Pan has fallen! and never more his creed
Shall chain the free intelligence of man.
The Christ is born, to purify the earth;
To raise the lowly, to make rich the poor,
To teach a faith of charity and love.
Rejoice! rejoice! an error has expired;
And the new Truth shall reign for evermore!"

LOVE AWEARY OF THE WORLD

LOVE AWEARY OF THE WORLD.

I.

Oh! my love is very lovely,
In her mind all beauties dwell;
She is robed in living splendour,
Grace and modesty attend her,
And I love her more than well.
But I'm weary, weary, weary,
To despair my soul is hurl'd;
I am weary, weary, weary,
I am weary of the world!

II.

She is kind to all about her,
For her heart is pity's throne;
She has smiles for all men's gladness,
She has tears for every sadness,
She is hard to me alone.
And I'm weary, weary, weary,
From a love-lit summit hurl'd;
I am weary, weary, weary,
I am weary of the world!

III.

When my words are words of wisdom,
All her spirit I can move;
At my wit her eyes will glisten,
But she flies, and will not listen,
If I dare to speak of love.

Oh! I'm weary, weary, weary,
  By a storm of passions whirl'd;
I am weary, weary, weary,
  I am weary of the world!

IV.

True, that there are others fairer—
  Fairer?—No, that cannot be—
Yet some maids of equal beauty,
High in soul and firm in duty,
  May have kinder hearts than she.
Why, my heart, so weary, weary,
  To and fro by passion whirl'd?—
Why so weary, weary, weary,
  Why so weary of the world?

V.

Were my love but passing fancy,
  To another I might turn;
But I'm doom'd to love unduly
One who will not answer truly,
  And who freezes when I burn;
And I'm weary, weary, weary,
  To despair my soul is hurl'd;
I am weary, weary, weary,
  I am weary of the world!

THE LOVER'S SECOND THOUGHTS ON WORLD-WEARINESS.

I.

HEART! take courage! 'tis not worthy
For a woman's scorn to pine:
If her cold indifference wound thee,
There are remedies around thee
For such malady as thine.
Be no longer weary, weary,
From thy love-lit summits hurl'd;
Be no longer weary, weary,
Weary, weary of the world!

II.

If thou must be loved by woman,
Seek again—the world is wide;
It is full of loving creatures,
Fair in form, and mind, and features—
Choose among them for thy bride.
Be no longer weary, weary,
To and fro by passion whirl'd:
Be no longer weary, weary,
Weary, weary of the world!

III.

Or if Love should lose thy favour,
Try the paths of honest fame,
Climb Parnassus' summit hoary,
Carve thy way by deeds of glory,
Write on History's page thy name.

Be no longer weary, weary,
To the depths of sorrow hurl'd;
Be no longer weary, weary,
Weary, weary of the world!

IV.

Or if these shall fail to move thee,
Be the phantoms unpursued,
Try a charm that will not fail thee
When old age and grief assail thee—
Try the charm of doing good.
Be no longer weak and weary,
By the storms of passion whirl'd;
Be no longer weary, weary,
Weary, weary of the world!

V.

Love is fleeting and uncertain,
And can hate where it adored;
Chase of glory wears the spirit,
Fame not always follows merit,
Goodness is its own reward.
Be no longer weary, weary,
From thine happy summits hurl'd;
Be no longer weary, weary,
Weary, weary of the world!

THE DROP OF WATER.

I.

ALONE, amid a million souls,
Round him the tide of people rolls;
But lorn and desolate is he,
None heeding what his lot may be—
A drop of water in the sea.

II.

'Mid all the crowds that round him swarm,
He feels for him no heart will warm;
There is not one that knows his name,
Or cares to ask him whence he came;
His life or death to them the same.

III.

The rich man's chariot passes by,
And lackeys with a saucy eye,
From outside plush and inward meals,
Grin at him, as the rattling wheels
Splash him all o'er, from head to heels.

IV.

He walketh on, a friendless boy,
With much of hope, with little joy;
Elbow'd for ever by the proud,
As if they grudged the room allow'd
To this mean mortal in the crowd.

V.

On through the busy mass he goes,
But whither bent he scarcely knows;
Through lane and street, and park and square,
And looks at wealth he may not share,
Though he is hungry and half-bare.

VI.

For him amid these houses small—
For him amid these mansions tall,
There is not one, where he could go,
And say, "I am a child of woe;
To cheer me, let the wine-cup flow."

VII.

No; he is friendless and alone—
To no one are his sorrows known—
His hope, or joy, or grief, or fear,
There is not one would care to hear,
Or say the word, "Be thou of cheer!"

VIII.

And evil thoughts will sometimes rise,
When flaunting wealth affronts his eyes;
Envy, perchance, and discontent,
That he into this world was sent—
No good with all his evils blent.

IX.

"No good?" saith he. "Ah, surely wrong!
Fresh health and youth to me belong;
And from endurance I can learn
Still to endure, and never turn
From the high thoughts with which I burn."

X.

And still within himself he says,
"Each man must pass his evil days—
Each man should suffer ere his prime,
If up the world's high steeps he'd climb,
Some grief to fit him for his time.

XI.

"I am not all alone nor sad;
The face of Nature makes me glad,
The breath of morn, the evening's sigh,
The contemplation of the sky,
That fills my soul with yearnings high;—

XII.

"The leafy glory of the woods,
The rushing of the mountain floods,
The wind that bends the lofty tree,
The roaring of the eternal sea,—
All yield an inward joy to me.

XIII.

I find a pleasure in the sight
Of meadows green and corn-fields bright;
I find a pleasure in the lay
Of birds that hail the breaking day,
Or warble to the moonlight gray.

XIV.

"If no man loves me, Nature's voice
Is kind, and bids my heart rejoice:
The path I go, true souls have trod;
I will look upwards from the clod,
With a firm heart, and trust in God."

XV.

And thus he walks from hour to hour,
From day to day, and gains new power
Over himself; and undismay'd,
In conscious rectitude array'd,
He labours as his impulse bade.

XVI.

He looks on hardship, and it sinks;
He measures peril, and it shrinks;
Before him difficulties fly,
Scared by that quietude of eye,
Serene to suffer or defy.

XVII.

And still, 'mid the perennial strife
With worldly things, that makes his life,
He never plays the worldling's part,
Or ever from his grateful heart
Allows the freshness to depart.

XVIII.

Amid the city's ceaseless hum,
Still to his soul the visions come
Of the green woodlands far away,
Where, in communion all the day
With Nature, he was wont to stray.

XIX.

And mixing with his fellows, still
He finds some good amid the ill;
And pitying those whose souls are blind,
Nor hating those of evil mind,
He learns to love all human kind.

XX.

To him all errors of the past
Teach wisdom where his lot is cast;
And after struggles hard and long,
With self, and with temptation strong,
And pride that sought to lead him wrong,—

XXI.

He learns this truth; that nought below
Can lasting recompense bestow
But Virtue;—that the Love of Fame
Is something better than a name,
If Love of Virtue feed its flame;—

XXII.

That to the mind not mured in self,
Nor toiling for the love of pelf,
Wealth may be worth its cost of brain,
That gives the power to solace pain,
And lift the fallen up again.

XXIII.

Take courage, ye who wander here,
Lonely and sad, and be of cheer!
This man, who had no aids to climb,
But his true heart and soul sublime,
Lives in the annals of his time.

XXIV.

So, by an ever wise decree,
The drop of water in the sea
Awakens to a glorious birth,
Becomes a pearl of matchless worth,
And shines resplendent in the earth.

THE DIONYSIA; OR, FESTIVALS OF BACCHUS.

My fancy travell'd back three thousand years
To find the meaning of the ancient days,
And disencumber their simplicity
From the corruptions of a later time.
I fashion'd in my mind the god-like shape
Of Dionysius, mighty conqueror,
Who taught the early nations how to live:
No vulgar Bacchus straddling on a cask,
Drunken and bestial, but a king of men;
Noble in intellect, and fair in form,
With ivy and with budding violets crown'd,
And bearing on his cheerful face the glow
Of kindly wisdom and perpetual youth.
So to my thought appear'd the demi-god;
The same that taught the ignorant hinds of Greece
To plough the soil, and reap the annual corn;
That taught the grateful villages to press
The grape and apple for refreshing drink,
To clip the goat, and shear the sheep for wool,
To draw from willing Earth its constant stores
Of blessings, and be thankful for the gifts,
Proving their thankfulness by temperate use:
The same that swept his armies o'er the East,
And conquer'd India—mightiest name malign'd—
Philosopher and Hero. Once his praise
Resounded o'er the smiling vales of Greece,
And youths and maidens came from all the bowers
To chant loud hymns in honour of his name;
And Athens—ere she rotted to her fall

With luxury, lasciviousness, and sloth—
Vied with all Greece to celebrate his feasts
With greatest pomp of high solemnity.

Come from your graves, ideas of the past!
And live again in song. The Athenian streets
Teem with a multitude of young and old:
The Archons, and the people, and the priests,
To celebrate the Dionysian rites,
With dance, and song, and joyous revelry.
A troop of youths come first, who hold aloft
Two sacred vessels. One is filled with wine,
And one with water: holiest the last,
For water is the mother of the vine,
The nurse and fountain of fecundity,
The adorner and refresher of the world.
Then come a hundred virgins—flower of Greece—
Clad in white robes, with ivy in their hair,
Who carry baskets fill'd with choicest fruits,
With apples and pomegranates, figs and grapes,
Amid which twine and slide small silvery snakes,
To teach the people, by a parable,
There dwells a poisonous serpent in excess.
The thyrsus-bearers follow in a rout,
With drums, and pastoral pipes, and mellow flutes:
Amid the crowd they scatter cones of pine,
As emblems of the fruitfulness of Earth;
And sing, full-voiced, the Dionysian hymn.

Io! Io! Evohé!
Let the dance and song abound:
The corn is springing from the ground,

The vine puts forth its tender leaves,
The swallow builds in barns and eaves—
Io ! Bacché ! Evohé !
There shall be bread for all the year,
And wine the heart of man to cheer—
Io ! Io ! Evohé !

Io ! Io ! Evohé !
For these bounties—ever free—
Ever grateful let us be,
And use them wisely, day and night,
For health, and strength, and pure delight.
Io ! Bacché ! Evohé !
God of the water and the wine.
The blessing's ours, the praise is thine.
Io ! Io ! Evohé !

The chorus passes; and another crowd
Follow with other rites, and other songs.
Lo ! mounted on an ass, Silenus rides,
Obese and drunken, crown'd with poppy-flowers,
And reeling as he sits. Around him throng
The crowd of men and women, shouting forth
Their gibes and jests, their laughter and their scorn.
Wise are the people, even in rites like these;
Each ceremony, frantic or grotesque,
Has its own meaning, and subserves an end.
Great Dionysius teaches evermore
The principles of use, and temperate joy.
But as the will is weak when pleasure goads
To overstep the wholesome boundaries
That separate enjoyment from abuse,

Silenus ever follows in his train,
The type of gluttony, excess, and lust.
Him, all the people point at as he goes,
Half-falling from his ass with idiot stare;
And mock him with their fingers and their songs.

Dirty Silenus! god of swine,
Drunken on the lees of wine;
Mad Silenus! old and fat,
Round and pond'rous as a vat:
Youth and Beauty gaze on thee,
Warn'd by thy deformity.

Foolish god! that hast grown old
Ere thy middle life is told;
Bald and blear, and weak and dull,
Ere thy growth has reach'd its full;
Mad Silenus! god of swine,
Drunken on the lees of wine.

YOUNG GENIUS.

IMBUED with the seraphic fire
To wake the music of the lyre,
To love—to know—and to aspire:—

Thou seest in thy youthful dream
All Nature robed in light supreme,
And thou wouldst carol in the beam;

Happy—yet most unhappy still!
I dread to think what good and ill,
What joy and grief, thy heart shall fill!

Great shall thy pleasures be—thy soul
Shall chant with planets as they roll,
Made one with Nature—part and whole.

The clouds that flush the morning sky,
The wind that wooes the branches high,
The leaves that whisper and reply;

The heart of every living thing,
The flowers that gem the breast of spring,
The russet birds that soar and sing;

The pendulous click of night and day,
The change of seasons as they play
In heavenly unison alway;

The summer's sigh, the winter's roar,
The beat of billows on the shore,
Making deep music evermore;

All sight, all sound, all sense shall be
The fountains of thine ecstasy,
And daily minister to thee.

To thee the past shall disengage
The wisdom of its darkest page,
And give it for thy heritage;

The present, with its hopes and fears,
Its struggles, triumphs, smiles, and tears,
And glory of the coming years;

All shall be given to feed thy mind
With Love and Pity for thy kind,
And every sympathy refined.

All these, and more, shall be thine own,
And round thine intellectual throne
The applause of millions shall be blown.

Thy words shall fill the mouths of men,
The written lightnings of thy pen
Shall flash upon their wondering ken.

Oh Fate—oh Privilege sublime!
And art thou tempted? Wilt thou climb?
Young genius! budding to thy prime?

Reflect :—and weigh the loss and gain ;
All joy is counterpoised by pain :—
And nothing charms which we attain.

Who loves the music of the spheres
And lives on Earth, must close his ears
To many voices which he hears.

'Tis evermore the finest sense
That feels the anguish most intense
At daily outrage, gross and dense.

The greater joy the keener grief,
Of Nature's balances, the chief,
She grants nor favour, nor relief.

And vain, most vain, is youthful trust,
For men are evermore unjust
To their superior fellow-dust,—

And ever turn malicious eyes
On those whom most they idolize,
And break their hearts with calumnies.

Their slanders, like the tempest-stroke,
May leave the cowslip's stem unbroke,
But rend the branches of the oak.

If Genius live, 'tis made a slave ;
And if it die—the true and brave—
Men pluck its heart out on its grave,

And then dissect it for the throng,
And say, "'Twas this,—so weak, or strong,
That pour'd such living floods of song."

Each fault of Genius is a crime,
For Cant or Folly to beslime—
Sent drifting on the stream of Time.

Wouldst thou escape such cruel fate,
Live in the valley,—watch and wait,—
But climb not—seek not to be great.

Yet if thou lovest song so well,
That thou must sing, though this befell
And worse than this, ineffable;

If thou wouldst win a lasting fame;
If thou the immortal wreath wouldst claim,
And make the Future bless thy name;

Begin thy perilous career;—
Keep high thy heart, thy conscience clear;—
And walk thy way without a fear.

And if thou hast a voice within,
That ever whispers—"Work and win,"
And keeps thy soul from sloth and sin:

If thou canst plan a noble deed,
And never flag till it succeed,
Though in the strife thy heart should bleed:

If thou canst struggle day and night,
And in the envious world's despite,
Still keep thy cynosure in sight:

If thou canst bear the rich man's scorn,
Nor curse the day that thou wert born,
To feed on husks, and he on corn:

If thou canst dine upon a crust,
And still hold on with patient trust,
Nor pine that Fortune is unjust:

If thou canst see, with tranquil breast,
The knave or fool in purple dress'd,
Whilst thou must walk in tatter'd vest:

If thou canst rise ere break of day,
And toil and moil till evening gray,
At thankless work, for scanty pay:

If, in thy progress to renown,
Thou canst endure the scoff and frown
Of those who strive to pull thee down:

If thou canst bear the averted face,
The gibe, or treacherous embrace,
Of those who run the selfsame race:

If thou in darkest days canst find
An inner brightness in thy mind,
To reconcile thee to thy kind:—

Whatever obstacles control,
Thine hour will come—go on, true soul!
Thou'lt win the prize, thou'lt reach the goal.

If not—what matters? tried by fire,
And purified from low desire,
Thy spirit shall but soar the higher.

Content and hope thy heart shall buoy,
And men's neglect shall ne'er destroy
Thy secret peace, thy inward joy;

And when thou sittest on the height,
Thy song shall be its own delight,
And cheer thee in the world's despite.

THE VISION OF DANTON.

The Hôtel de Ville and the Place de Grève of Paris are celebrated as having been the scene of most of the late and preceding Revolutions. The pavement of the Grève has been stained with the blood of the victims of all the Revolutions, and with that of criminals executed by the hand of justice, till within the last few years. This fabulous dream of Danton, in the chambers of this historical mansion,—the very Palace of Revolution,—was written in October, 1847, in anticipation of the Revolution which broke out in February, 1848.

I.

WEARY of strife renew'd from day to day,
Th' inveterate war of parties brought to bay,
With clash of hatreds jarring on his sense,
And poison'd darts of hostile eloquence,
With all the excitement of the brain and heart,
That forms the life of men, who play their part
In mighty dramas,—Danton lay at rest,
His face to Heaven, his hands upon his breast,
And said within himself,—"It must not be—
Surely this grief shall end, and France be free."

II.

He closed his eyes, and saw a vision pass
Clear as a show in a magician's glass;
He saw a figure, massive like his own,
Headless and quivering, from a scaffold thrown;

He saw the pavement running red with blood,
And crowds insatiate dabbling in the flood.
He saw Despair at every threshold stand
And ruffian Terror stalking o'er the land,
And sigh'd remorseful—"Mine the guilt," said he,
"But surely it shall pass, and France be free."

III.

The vision changed: he saw the embattled world,
And France defiant with her flag unfurl'd:
He heard her trumpets peal; her cannons roar;
Her captains shout and wave her tricolor.
He saw their leader fattening the sod
With bones of myriads; heard the cry to God
Raised by the ravaged lands; he heard and saw
That Might was murder, and that Force was law;
And sigh'd for pity—"Heaven is just," said he,
"And this new plague shall pass, and France be free."

IV.

The vision darken'd: Paris the superb,
The beautiful, impatient of a curb,
Received the law from strangers at her gate,
And gave for insults nothing but her hate.
She who with trumpet-voice had roused the lands,
Felt on her prostrate neck the Cossack's hands;
Heard in her panting streets the invader's drum,
And groan'd for worse indignities to come:
And e'en in slumber Danton blush'd to see—
"Surely this shame shall pass, and France be free!'

V.

It changed again: and lo! a royal drone,
Untaught by suffering, dozed upon the throne;
Or waking, fancied that his hands could bind
The tide of Thought, the Reason of mankind.
Another follow'd bigoted, but strong,
Who, deeming Time had gone a century wrong,
Strove with a desperate force to turn the hand,
And bring the darkness back upon the land;
And Danton groan'd—"Oh, that these eyes might see
This folly brought to shame, and France made free."

VI.

The vision brighten'd: Paris as of old
Aroused her faubourgs as the tocsin toll'd;
Placed in each hand a weapon for the Right,
And fought its battle in the world's despite;
Dragg'd the degraded purple through the town,
Roll'd in the dust the sceptre and the crown;
And read the nations listening far and near
A mighty lesson full of hope and fear;
And Danton shouted in his sleep to see—
"Now has the sorrow pass'd, and France is free."

VII.

Another change and shifting of the parts—
The fool was foil'd—the knave essay'd his arts;
He hated Freedom and her priests and scribes,
And swore to crush her, not with force, but bribes.

The ignoble plan succeeded for a while—
The halcyon days of Mammon and of guile;
The dense corruption spread from high to low,
Till virtue perish'd in its overflow;
And Danton groan'd—"Oh, worst of infamy!
When shall this sorrow pass, and France be free?"

VIII.

What more he saw was dim before his eyes,
Shapes undefined and huge unsymmetries—
Darkness and storm and thunder-clouds afar,
And forms gigantic panoplied for war;
But still a radiance glimmer'd through the cloud,—
And a voice seem'd to speak to him aloud:—
"Not all in vain the struggles thou hast seen,
Truth bides her time and keeps her brow serene:
Each seed she scatters bears its destined tree—
The grief shall pass, and France shall yet be free."

GOOD-NIGHT.

I.

Hush, Nature! let no jarring sound
The drowsy air encumber,
While she, the fairest of thy works,
Is sinking into slumber.
Be silent, earth! ye winds, be still—
Let nought from sleep alarm her;
Nor midnight storm, nor sudden fire,
Nor prowling robber harm her.

II.

Good-night! and be her pleasant rest
Unbroken till the morrow;
May all her visions, like herself,
Be sweet, and void of sorrow.
Good-night! and o'er her silent couch
While darkness spreads her cover,
May guardian angels watch and pray,
And bless her as they hover.

GOOD-MORROW.

[Music by FRANK MORI.]

I.

SHINE brightly through her casement, sun;
Thou gale, soft odours bring her;
Ye birds that hail the dawning day,
Your sweetest music sing her;
Smile, Nature, on her, as she wakes,
And hide all sights of sorrow;
And have no sounds but those of joy
To bid my love—good-morrow!

II.

Good-morrow to those lustrous eyes,
With bright good-humour beaming;
Good-morrow to those ruddy lips,
Where smiles are ever teeming.
Good-morrow to that happy face,
Undimm'd by cloud of sorrow.
Good-morrow, heart that clings to mine—
Good-morrow, love, good-morrow!

A SONG, AFTER A TOAST.

I.

If he to whom this toast we drink
Has brought the needy to his door,
Or raised the wretch from ruin's brink
From the abundance of his store:
If he has sooth'd the mourner's woe,
Or help'd young merit into fame,
This night our cups shall overflow
In honour of his name.

II.

If he be poor, and yet has striven
To ease the load of human care;
If to the famish'd he has given
One loaf that it was hard to spare;
If in his poverty erect,
He never did one deed of shame,
Fill high! we'll drain in deep respect
A bumper to his name.

III.

But rich or poor—if still his plan
Has been to play an honest part,
If he ne'er fail'd his word to man,
Or broke a trusting woman's heart;
If Emulation fire his soul
To snatch the meed of virtuous fame,
Fill high! we'll drain a flowing bowl
In honour of his name.

MY PLAYFÉLLOW.

I.

WHAT though you're only five years old,
A little roguish, romping fairy,
And I'm a man of care and toil—
We're comrades true, my little Mary!
We're friends and playmates, close and fond,
And heedless of the wind or weather;
Out-doors or in, 'tis all the same,
We leap, and laugh, and run together.

II.

We love to sit upon the grass
In summer days, in shady valleys,
Or play at merry "hide and seek"
Behind the trees in garden alleys.
And don't we wander forth alone,
To gather crops of meadow daisies?
Or hunt the noisy grasshopper
In all his green and secret places?

III.

And don't we catch the butterfly,
With mealy pinions, sailing lightly?
And don't you, when I let him free,
Gravely decide, I acted rightly?

And don't we teach the dog to beg,
And little puss to frisk and caper?
And don't I paint you birds and fish,
And cut you purses out of paper?

IV.

And don't we spin our humming-top
Together on the parlour table?
And don't your father call me fool,
And smile to utter such a fable?
And don't I tell you fairy tales,
At intercession of your mother?
And don't you kiss me when I've done,
And ask me to begin another?

V.

And don't you oft, with hands outstretch'd,
And eyes that shine like sun-lit fountains,
Protest you love me "big as trees,"
"Big as the world—and all its mountains?"
And don't you sometimes fall asleep,
Lock'd in my arms, quite worn and weary?
And don't I carry you to bed,
Too drowsy for your prayers, my deary?

VI.

Oh, yes! we're friends and comrades true,
There's not a bit of guile about you;
You shed such light around your path,
I'd think the world was dark without you.

And if to fourscore years I live,
However Time and Fate may vary,
I'll wish no better friend than you,
My little laughing, romping Mary.

LOVE IN HATE.

I.

Once I thought I could adore him,
Rich or poor, beloved the same;
Now I hate him and abhor him,
Now I loathe his very name;
Spurn'd at when I sued for pity,
Robb'd of peace and virgin fame

II.

If my hatred could consume him,
Soul and body, heart and brain;
If my will had power to doom him
To eternity of pain;
I would strike—and die, confessing
That I had not lived in vain.

III.

Oh, if in my bosom lying,
I could work him deadly scathe!
Oh, if I could clasp him, dying,
And receive his parting breath—
In one burst of burning passion
I would kiss him into death!

IV.

I would cover with embraces
Lips that once his love confess'd,
And that falsest of false faces,
Mad, enraptured, unrepress'd;
Then in agony of pity
I would die upon his breast.

LADY JANE.

I.

Oh, Lady Jane, dear Lady Jane,
Those beautiful and earnest eyes
Have shot their beams through many a brain,
And prompted many a world of sighs.
No wonder!—stony-hard and cold
Were he, who gazing on their light—
Ay, were he eighty winters old—
Felt no pulsation of delight.

II.

But tell us, dearest Lady Jane,
What secret witchery and spell
Hast thou to rule the hearts of men,
That not the hardest can rebel?
The hearts of men? Not theirs alone;
For women do not love thee less?
Thou hast some secret of thine own,
Thou saucy little sorceress!

III.

The blind old beggar on the road,
Fed by thy bounty, loves thee more
For gentle sympathy bestow'd,
Than for the tribute from thy store.

The peevish beldame, sour'd by want,
And teased by urchins far and near,
Selects thee for her confidant,
And breathes her sorrows in thine ear.

IV.

The kittens on the hearth prefer
Thy soft caress, than ours more sweet;
And jealous hound, and snarling cur,
Frolic with pleasure at thy feet.
The parrot swinging to and fro,
That sulks at others, talks to thee;
And tearful babes forget their woe,
And cuddle, happy, round thy knee.

V.

In fact, there's something, lady dear,
In thee, and on thee, and about—
A power—a charm—an atmosphere—
A fascination in and out,
That makes all creatures, high and low,
Love thee and trust thee. Tell us, then,
The reason why we love thee so—
Thou little fairy, Lady Jane!

VI.

What can it be? for I confess
I know of beauty great as thine;
Yet if it be not loveliness,
'Tis something in thee more divine.

'Tis not thy wit, or eloquence,
And thou hast both in ample store;
'Tis not thy birth, or wealth, or sense,
That makes us captive evermore.

VII.

What is it then? Thou canst not say—
Then let me tell thee, Lady Jane:
'Tis bright good-humour, warm as day;
'Tis sympathy for others' pain;
'Tis heart, and mind, and patience rich;
'Tis loving kindness, failing never;
These are thy spells, thou potent witch:
We can't resist—we're thine for ever!

THE PRAISE OF WOMEN.

" My curse on those of women ill who speke—
I praye to God that their neckys doe breke."
CHAUCER.

WOMAN may err—Woman may give her mind
To evil thoughts, and lose her pure estate;
But for *one* woman who affronts her kind
By wicked passions and remorseless hate,
A thousand make amends in age and youth,
By heavenly Pity, by sweet Sympathy,
By patient Kindness, by enduring Truth,
By Love, supremest in adversity.
Theirs is the task to succour the distress'd,
To feed the hungry, to console the sad,
To pour the balm upon the wounded breast,
And find dear Pity, even for the bad.
Blessings on Women! In the darkest day
Their love shines brightest; in the perilous hour
Their weak hands glow with strength our feuds to stay.
Blessings upon them! and if Man would show'r
His condemnation on the few that err,
Let him be calm, and cease his soul to vex;
Think of his mother, and for sake of her
Forgive them all, and bless their gentler sex.

SERENITY.

STANDING alone, in vale or mountain-top,
Upon the grassy plain or ocean shore,
Or far away upon a ship at sea,
We are the middle of the Universe.
Around us as a centre, Earth and Heaven
Describe their mystic circles evermore.
We move; and all the radii shape themselves
To the one point and focus of our eyes.
But in our mental life we disobey
The law of circles: on the outer verge
We stand for ever, sometimes looking down
Upon extraneous evil far removed
Beyond the bound of Fate's circumference,
Adown dark tangents infinitely stretch'd
Through gloomy Chaos, troubled by Despair.
At other times we seek the sunniest verge,
The amber and the purple blooms of Heaven,
And strive with yearning eyes, made dim by tears,
To pierce the secrets of a happier state.
Exulting are we now,—and now forlorn.
Lord, grant us wisdom! grant that we may stand
In the fair middle of the spiritual world,
Undarken'd by the glooms of utter night,
Undazzled by the noontide glow of day.
True wisdom and serenity of soul
Dwell in the centre, and avoid extremes.

THE BUILDING OF THE HOUSE.

I.

I HAVE a wondrous house to build,
A dwelling, humble yet divine;
A lowly cottage to be fill'd
With all the jewels of the mine.
How shall I build it strong and fair?
This noble house, this lodging rare,
So small and modest, yet so great?
How shall I fill its chambers bare
With use—with ornament—with state?

II.

My God hath given the stone and clay;
'Tis I must fashion them aright;
'Tis I must mould them day by day,
And make my labour my delight;
This cot, this palace, this fair home,
This pleasure-house, this holy dome,
Must be in all proportions fit,
That heavenly messengers may come
To lodge with him who tenants it.

III.

No fairy bower this house must be,
To totter at each gale that starts,
But of substantial masonry,
Symmetrical in all its parts:

Fit in its strength to stand sublime,
For seventy years of mortal time,
  Defiant of the storm and rain,
And well attemper'd to the clime
  In every cranny, nook, and pane.

IV.

I'll build it so, that if the blast
  Around it whistle loud and long,
The tempest when its rage has pass'd
  Shall leave its rafters doubly strong.
I'll build it so that travellers by
Shall view it with admiring eye,
  For its commodiousness and grace:
Firm on the ground—straight to the sky—
  A meek, but goodly dwelling-place.

V.

Thus noble in its outward form,
  Within I'll build it clean and white;
Not cheerless cold, but happy warm,
  And ever open to the light.
No tortuous passages or stair,
No chamber foul, or dungeon lair,
  No gloomy attic shall there be,
But wide apartments order'd fair
  And redolent of purity.

VI.

With three compartments furnish'd well,
The house shall be a home complete;
Wherein, should circumstance rebel,
The humble tenant may retreat.
The first a room wherein to deal
With men for human nature's weal,
A room where he may work or play,
And all his social life reveal
In its pure texture day by day.

VII.

The second, for his wisdom sought,
Where, with his chosen book or friend,
He may employ his active thought
To virtuous and exalted end.
A chamber lofty and serene,
With a door-window to the green
Smooth-shaven sward, and arching bowers,
Where lore or talk or song between,
May gild his intellectual hours.

VIII.

The third an oratory dim,
But beautiful, where he may raise,
Unheard of men, his daily hymn,
Of love and gratitude and praise.

Where he may revel in the light
Of things unseen and infinite,
  And learn how little he may be,
And yet how awful in thy sight,
  Ineffable Eternity!

IX.

Such is the house that I must build—
  This is the cottage—this the dome,—
And this the palace, treasure-fill'd
  For an immortal's earthly home.
Oh noble work of toil and care!
Oh task most difficult and rare!
  Oh simple but most arduous plan!
To raise a dwelling-place so fair,—
  The sanctuary of a MAN.

THE HISTORY OF A PAIR OF EYES.

I.

"You?—tell the history of mine eyes?
Well—some men's fancies *are* unruly!
'Twould take three volumes at the least—
Ay—twenty,—if you told it truly."
"No matter: let me try the task,
Though possibly my heart may rue it,
If, gazing on their light meanwhile,
I strive to render justice to it.

II.

"One morn—'twas twenty Mays ago—
The meadows gleam'd with flowery whiteness,
When on the world those eyelids oped,
And showed their inner orbs of brightness;
Two little gem-like spheres they were,
That knew no change of day or morrow;
Yet shone 'mid tears, as if to prove
The joy that had been born in sorrow.

III.

"Ere May a second time return'd,
Those little worlds were worlds of graces;
They look'd upon the earth and sky
And knew the light of loving faces.

They wept—they glitter'd—wept again—
And friends from strangers could remember,
And garner'd smiles beneath their lids,
To dart like meteors of November.

IV.

"Seven springs and summers cheer'd the earth—
Seven winters howl'd with stormy bluster,
And every season as it pass'd,
Left on those eyes increasing lustre.
They glow'd with many a baby-joy,
Suffused with tears of childlike gladness,
And sparkled with affection pure—
With hope, and sympathy, and sadness.

V.

"Ten years: and then on Nature's face,
Their long and silken lashes under,
At sunlight, starlight, or the moon,
They gazed with pleasure or with wonder.
They loved all lovely things of earth—
They beam'd with every sweet emotion—
Turn'd to the ground with modest grace,
Or look'd to Heaven with young devotion.

VI.

"But sixteen seasons wrought a change—
They learn'd a secret—by this token:—
That they could read in others' eyes
The admiration never spoken.

They learn'd what tell-tale mirrors show'd—
That whosoe'er might flout their bearer,
There might be maids as fair, perchance,
But not a living maiden fairer.

VII.

"The knowledge brought its natural fruit,
But being link'd with gentle feeling;
With sense, and modesty, and truth,
And virtue, past my wit's revealing;
Men's hearts were overthrown at once,
And through the world, you bright enslaver,
You walk'd—a thing of life and light—
On whom to look was joy and favour.

VIII.

"The hearts you wounded, who shall count?
Talk of three volumes of romances!
A hundred could not chronicle
The hurts, fatalities, mischances!
I cannot tell such endless tales
Half through, or quarter; who could read 'em?
Then, oh, be spiteful—heartless—vain—
And leave, oh, leave us to our freedom!

IX.

"But while, as now, you win our hearts
By sense and virtue, wit and kindness,
We gaze—we doat—we kneel—we pray—
The wisest worst, for utter blindness.

"Take pity, Clara,—make your choice—
The story of your eyes I've told you;
The sooner wed, the better fate
For those who hope as they behold you."

X.

So sang a knight of olden time;
The eyes he praised, with pleasure shining;
And Clara tripping from the porch,
Unloosed his arms around her twining.
"I've made my choice, for love is blind,
And it has proved my wit's undoing;
So fix the day, you foolish knight—
I'll marry you, and stop your wooing!"

NINETTE.

I.

Thou borrowest from that heaven of blue,
Oh, maiden dear!
The depth of that cerulean hue
In which thine eyes appear.

Within their orbs the sunshine lies
Without eclipse;
And smiles, like meteors of the skies,
Run races on thy lips.

Thou borrowest from the rising morn
The colour fair,
In which, thy temples to adorn,
Streams thy o'erflowing hair;—

And from the summer evening's glow,
On Alpine peaks,
The mingling roses strewn on snow
That decorate thy cheeks.

Thou borrowest from all Nature's store
Some charm or grace;
And hill and plain,—the sea and shore,—
Yield tribute to thy face.

II.

Pay, pay them back with usury,
Oh, maiden dear!
With heaven-blue eyes look piously
On Heaven's o'erarching sphere.

Nature has lent thee smiles of light,—
Repay in kind,
With fair Contentment ever bright,
And sunshine of the mind.

If she have lent thy cheeks a hue,—
The fairest wrought,—
Oh, pay her back with feeling true,
With love, and happy thought.

For every gift, a gift impart;
For face and form,
Give her a soul serene,—a heart
Pure, sympathetic, warm.

So shall thy debt be overpaid
With tribute free;
And Man, and Nature,—happy maid!
Be both in debt to thee.

THE QUARREL.

I.

"Hush, Joanna! 'tis quite certain
That the coffee was not strong;
Own your error, I'll forgive you,—
Why so stubborn in the wrong?"

II.

"You'll forgive me! Sir, I hate you!
You have used me like a churl;
Have my senses ceased to guide me?
Do you think I am a girl?"

III.

"Oh, no! you're a girl no longer,
But a woman form'd to please;
And it's time you should abandon
Childish follies such as these."

IV.

"Oh, I hate you! but why vex me?
If I'm old, you're older still;
I'll no longer be your victim,
And the creature of your will."

V.

"But, Joanna, why this pother?
It might happen I was wrong;
But, if common sense inspire me—
Still, that coffee was not strong."

VI.

"Common sense! you never had it;
Oh, that ever I was born!
To be wedded to a monster
Who repays my love with scorn."

VII.

"Well, Joanna, we'll not quarrel;
What's the use of bitter strife?
But I'm sorry I am married,—
I was mad to take a wife."

VIII.

"Mad, indeed! I'm glad you know it;
But, if law can break the chain,
I'll be tied to you no longer
In this misery and pain."

IX.

"Hush, Joanna! shall the servants
Hear you argue ever wrong?
Can you not have done with folly?—
Own the coffee was not strong."

X.

"Oh! you goad me past endurance,
Trifling with my woman's heart!
But I loathe you, and detest you,—
Villain! monster! let us part!"

XI.

Long this foolish quarrel lasted,
Till Joanna, half afraid
That her empire was in peril,
Summon'd never-failing aid;—

XII.

Summon'd tears, in copious torrents,—
Tears, and sobs, and piteous sighs;
Well she knew the potent practice,
The artillery of the eyes.

XIII.

And it chanced as she imagined,—
Beautiful in grief was she,—
Beautiful to best advantage,
And a tender heart had he.

XIV.

Kneeling at her side, he soothed her,
"Dear Joanna! I was wrong;
Nevermore I'll contradict you,—
But, oh make my coffee strong!"

THE BRIDGE.

Upon the solitary bridge the light
Shone dim; the wind swept howling on its way,
And tower and spire stood hidden in the gray
Half-darkness of the raw and rainy night.
When one still young and fair, with eyes mad-bright,
Paced up and down, and with a look of woe,
Gazed on the waters gliding black below,
Or the dull houses looming on her sight,—
And said within herself,—"Can I endure
Longer this weight of misery and scorn?
Ah, no! Love-blighted—sick at heart—and poor;—
Deceived—undone—and utterly forlorn!
Why should I live?—forgive me, Lord!" she cried,
Sprang sudden to the brink, dash'd headlong down
—and died!

THE TWO NIGHTINGALES.

AN APOLOGUE FOR POETS.

In the deep quiet of an ancient wood,
Two nightingales, that since the sun had set
Had fill'd the enraptured solitude with song,
Sat silent for awhile, and thus began,
One with the other, interchange of thoughts.

"I'm weary," said the one with weakest voice,
"Of singing all night long to these dull boughs,
With none to listen to my heavenly notes.
What are to me these green insensate woods,
Yon moon and stars, and the unheeding sky?
I would have lovers wander in the shade
At twilight hour, to listen to my voice
And call it beautiful. I would have youths,
Teeming with gentle fancies, quit their books,
And bend a willing ear to my sweet strains:
I would have sages hearken to my lay,
And own me poet of the pensive night.
Why should I waste my music on the winds,
Or how sing on, abandon'd to neglect?
I will away, and force the callous crowd
To be delighted. Through some city vast
My voice shall sound, till busy men shall stop,
And to my floods of swelling melody
Give ear enraptured. Brother, come away!"

"No," said the other—"I am happy here;
To me all needless is the world's applause.
Amid these oaks, surrounded by these hills,
Lull'd by the dash of waters down the rocks,
Look'd on by moon and stars, leave me to sing.
My breast is full—my song an utterance
Of joy, that gives me joy to breathe it forth;
My song its own reward.—Why should I court
The ear of men, or pine in useless grief
That hither comes no audience for my lays?
Mine is a hymn of Gratitude and Love,
An overflowing from my inmost heart;
And if men listen and are pleased, not less
My pleasure in administering to theirs.
But if none care to hear my melodies,
Not the less happy would I be to sing."

"Thou poor in spirit!" said the first; "Not mine
This dull contentment, this ignoble peace,—
To which I leave thee. On adventurous wing
I take my flight to the abodes of men,
And they shall honour and exalt my name:—
So fare thee well!" and as he said, he flew
From his companion, scorning his low mind;
And ere the morning reach'd, on pinions free,
A vast, smoke-mantled, dim metropolis,
With domes and columns, spires and monuments,
And multitudinous chimneys tall as these,
Towering towards the ever hazy sky;
And here alighting on a house-top, sat,
And look'd about him. Far on every side

Stretch'd the long line of streets and thoroughfares,
Trod by a busy and impatient mass;
Church-bells rang heavily on the morning air,
And chariots rattled o'er the dusty stones.
Loud was the roaring of the multitude,
Loud was the clink of hammers on the ear,
And loud the whirling of incessant wheels,
Pistons and pumps, revolving cylinders,
And ever-hissing steam in factories vast.
But nothing daunted by the hubbub round,
And conscious of some utterance in himself,
The ambitious nightingale began his song.
'Twas a forced effort in the eye of Day,
For bird like him, by Night alone inspired;
But still he sang, and on the smoky air
Pour'd a full stream of no mean music forth.
Till sunny noon, till lamplit eve, he sang,
But no one listen'd: all men were absorb'd
In the pursuit of pleasure or of gain,
And had no time for melodies like his.
Weary at heart the nightingale became,
And disappointment rankled into hate:—
"Alas!" said he, "the age of song is past!
I'm born too late!—Merit has no reward;—
The cold, unfeeling, and most grovelling Crowd
Forsakes dear Poesy for love of wealth,
And all forlorn and desolate am I."

So saying, he outstretch'd his wings, and fled
Back to his solitude, and sang no more;
And living voiceless—angry with himself,

And with the world—he died before his time,
And left no mourner to lament his fate.

The other nightingale, more wise than he,
With fuller voice and music more divine,
Stay'd in the woods, and sang but when inspired
By the sweet breathing of the midnight wind—
By the mysterious twinkling of the stars—
By adoration of the Great Supreme—
By Beauty in all hues and forms around—
By Love and Hope, and Gratitude and Joy;
And thus inspired, the atmosphere was rife
With the prolong'd sweet music that he made.
He sought no listeners—heedless of applause—
But sang as the stars shone, from inward light,
A blessing to himself and all who heard.

The cotter, wending weary to his home,
Linger'd full oft to listen to his song,
And felt 'twas beautiful, and bless'd the strain;
And lonely students, wandering in the woods,
Loved nature more because this bird had sung.

THE WANDERERS BY THE SEA.

ANOTHER APOLOGUE FOR POETS.

I SAW a crowd of people on the shore
Of a deep, dark illimitable sea;
Pale-faced they were, and turn'd their eyes to earth,
And stoop'd low down, and gazed upon the sands;
And ever and anon they roam'd about,
Backwards and forwards; and whene'er they stopp'd
It was to gather on the weedy beach
The dulse and tangles, or the fruitful shells,
Whose living tenants fasten'd to the rocks
They pluck'd away, and listlessly devour'd.
And when they'd eaten all their fill, they sat
One by the other on the placid shore,
And with much labour and incessant care
Polish'd the shells, until to brightest hues,
Various and intermingling, they were wrought;
And these they hung around their necks and limbs,
And look'd each other in the face, and smiled.
This done, they wander'd on the shore again,
And ate and ate, and drank and drank, and slept,
Day after day—night after night—the same.
Meanwhile the firmament was bright with stars
And from the clouds aërial voices came
In tones of melody, now low, now loud;
Angelic forms were hovering around
In robes of white and azure; heaven itself

Appear'd to open and invite the gaze
Of these poor stooping earth-enamour'd crowds.
But they ne'er look'd, nor heard. Though the deep sea
Flash'd phosphorescent; though dim seen afar,
The white sails and the looming hulls of ships
Gleam'd through the darkness, and the pregnant air
Gave birth to visions swathed in golden fire—
They look'd not. Though the heavenly voices call'd,
And told them of the world of life and light,
Of Beauty, Power, Love, Mystery, and Joy,
That lay beyond, and might be seen of those,
However lowly, that would lift their eyes—
They heeded not, nor heard; but wander'd on,
Plucking their weeds and gathering their shells.
And if they heard the murmur of the sea
That bore them tidings of the Infinite—
They knew it not; but lay them idly down,
Thought of the morrow's food, and sank to sleep.
And when they woke, with their care-deaden'd eyes,
And pallid faces, and toil-burden'd backs,
Began once more their customary search
Upon the bare and melancholy sands;
As if that search were all the end of life,
And all things else but nothingness and void.
But 'mid that low-brow'd multitude were some
Of larger faculties, and foreheads fair,
Laden with knowledge: and of eyes that beam'd
Intelligence, and quick desire to know;—
Who saw the visions teeming in the air;
Who heard the voices breathing in the sky;
Who o'er the illimitable waters stretch'd
Their eager gaze, and through the gloom descried

Shadows of beauty, which, but half reveal'd
Added a wonder to their loveliness;—
Who heard celestial music night and morn
Play'd in the lap of ocean, or attuned
To every motion of the ceaseless wind;—
Who heard th' harmonious cadence of the stars;
Who saw the angels with their azure wings;
And lifted up their voices in a song
Of praise and joy, that not from them were hidden,
By blinding avarice and worldly care
Of shells and sea-weed, all th' immensity
Of nature—all th' infinitude of heaven—
And all the hope, bright as a certainty,
That here, upon this low and gloomy shore,
Our life is but a germ, that shall expand
To fruit and foliage in a brighter clime.

And all of these spake to the crowd in song
And bade them lift their dull earth-bending eyes,
And see how beautiful were Life and Time;
And bade them listen to the eternal chant
Of Nature, overflowing with its joy,
And the mysterious hymn for ever sung
By Earth to Heaven, of which their words inspired
Were the interpreters to human kind.

And some of these were angry with the crowd,
Who would not listen, and whose ears were vex'd
With all that would distract them from their shells,
And weltering dulse and tangles on the shore.

But one of them with venerable hair,
And a large brow, and face serene as Heaven,
Rebuked them for their wrath with mild sad words,
And said—"Oh brothers, weary not your souls?

If they are happy with their weeds and shells,
Let them alone :—And if their hearts prefer
Pebbles to stars, and sound of their own feet
Plashing amid the waters, to the song
Of angels, and the music of the spheres—
Let them alone. Why should ye vex yourselves?
Are ye not happy that to your keen sight
Those things are shown which they refuse to see?
Are ye not happy that your ears can hear
The oracles of Nature, mute to them?
That ye are priests and prophets, though contemn'd?
Brothers!—be wise—make music to your minds!
For he who singeth from his own full heart
Has his reward even in the utterance.
Brothers!—be wise—and sing your songs in peace!"

A TRAVELLER'S TALE.

Of what shall travellers talk on rainy days?
Of rain and snow? the sunshine and the storm?
Of Politics? Religion? Scandal? Shop?
Or personal anecdote? The weather? No;—
The topic is full stale. Of politics?
'Tis dangerous ground. Of creed? more dangerous still.
Of scandal? Heaven forefend! Or of the shop?
I prithee let us leave the shop alone!
Of personal anecdote? Why, what is that
But the old scandal in a new disguise!
What shall we talk of, then? I know not well,
Unless you hear a mournful thing that chanced
Here in the Pyrenees, two years ago.
I parted from the heroes of the tale,
Two friends and comrades, in this very room,
And little thought, amid their merriment,
Their lusty health and joyous hopefulness,
How soon the end would come. This cabaret
Resounding now with laughter, jest, and talk,
Seems no fit scene to lodge a tragedy.
Yet so it was:—but let me tell the tale.

'Twas in September, just two years ago,
That Vere and Huntley, youths scarce twenty-one,
And fresh from Cambridge on their way to Spain
Stopp'd in the Pyrenees. They did not hunt,
Or shoot, or angle, or delight in sport,

But seem'd to glory in ascending hills,
Scaling high rocks, and tracking waterfalls.
They loved the rude and dizzy mountain-top,
And all the splendour of its wildest scenes.
Vere had a poet's eye and painter's hand,
And Huntley, though no poet, stored his mind
With images of beauty:—both would walk
Three leagues ere breakfast to a precipice,
To see the sunrise in its majesty;
Ever on foot, and ever full of joy.
Their cheeks were tann'd in the healthy open air;
Their limbs were vigorous, their hearts were light,
Their talk was cheerful as the song of birds;
And when they laugh'd, the clear loud volleys rang
With such contagious music, that I've laugh'd
For very sympathy, yet knew not why.

It was a lovely morning, crisp and fresh,
When they invited me to share their walk,
And trace a mountain-torrent to its source.
They had no object but the exercise,
And search for natural beauty, ever new.
But I had promised Jean Baptiste, the guide,
To hunt the chamois with him, and I long'd
For my own sport, more hazardous than theirs,
And more congenial to my ruder tastes.
And so we parted. "We'll be back," said Vere,
"At six, to dinner in the Cabaret:
Wilt thou dine with us, Nimrod of the hills?"—
—"With all my heart!" and so we went our ways,
And far adown the valley I could hear
Their jocund voices singing English songs,

And catch amid the pauses of the tune
The echoes of their laughter on the wind.

I had good sport upon the hills that day.
When I return'd, I noticed as I came
A crowd of peasants standing at the door;
Here was a group of women,—there of men;
And all discussing something that had chanced,
With quick gesticulation, and confused
And broken sentences:—some raised their hands,
Look'd up to heaven, and shook their heads and sigh'd.
While twenty voices speaking all at once,
Told the same story twenty different ways.
"Here comes the other Englishman," said one:
"There's a sad sight within!" "Ay! sad indeed!"
Replied another. Quickly passing through,
I forced my way into the inner room,
And there beheld poor Huntley on the bed
With Vere beside him, kneeling on the ground,
Clasping his hands, and burying his face
Between them, and the body of his friend.
In all the beauty and the pride of youth,
Huntley went forth at morning, and ere night
He lay a corpse.—An awful loveliness
Sat on his clay-cold form; so calm he lay
Amid the hurry and anxiety
And deep distress and pitying words and groans
Of those around—it seem'd as he alone
Of all that crowd were happy. He was dead;—
But how he died, 'twas long ere I could learn
From the survivor, who with senseless words
And sobs, and groans, and prayers to Heaven for help,

Broke off continually what he began.
I learn'd it afterwards when he grew calm,
And loved him ever since. They'd track'd the stream
From morn till noon, discovering as they went,
New beauties, grandeurs, and sublimities
At every step. Right well in all her moods,
Those friends congenial loved dear Nature's face.
'Twas now the torrent with its burst and fall,
That charm'd their sight; now, 'twas th' umbrageous arch
Of trees, high-perch'd on the o'erhanging rock;
Then 'twas the rock itself, with lichens grown,
And pine and larch;—and then it was a glimpse
Betwixt the crags into a world beneath,
Stretching in loveliness of cultured plains,
Studded with farms and clustering villages
That fill'd them with delight.—And so they clomb
From crag to crag, and conquer'd as they went
More perils than they knew: lured ever on
By novelty of beauty and the heat
Of young adventure; but they clomb too well.
Vere took an upward track, and scaled the crag,
While Huntley, travelling lower, reach'd a ledge,
He knew not how—where—pausing on the brink
With scarcely room enough to lodge his heel,
He could not stand with safety—or descend
Without the risk of falling from the height,
Two hundred feet into a chasm below,
Where boil'd the angry flood o'er jutting rocks.
Ten feet above him in security
Stood Vere—alarm'd,—but how to reach his friend
Seem'd to defy all knowledge to discern,

Or known, his utmost daring to attempt.
To mount seem'd easier than to clamber down;
And he was growing dizzy where he stood.
Vere stretch'd himself upon the beetling edge
Of the tall precipice, and held his hand
Toward his friend, in hope, if hands could meet,
He might, by help of some projecting root,
Some angle of the rock, or tufted herb,
Hoist him in safety; but the attempt was vain.
Their hands, by utmost stress of yearning grasp
Could reach no nearer than a long arm's length;
So Vere bethought him of his walking-stick,
An old companion of his mountain walks,
And stretch'd the handle to his eager friend,
That he might grasp it with his strong right hand,
And with the left spring upward to the root,
Twisted and sinuous, of a mountain ash
That nodded o'er the stream; and by this aid
Attain the safe high platform of the rock.
He caught the friendly aid; but as he grasp'd,
He felt it lengthening—lengthening—in his hand;
And his eyes swam in horror as he saw
The handle separating from the stick,
Leaving a scabbard in the hand of Vere,
The sword in his. Vere shriek'd in agony:
He had forgotten. Huntley groan'd but once—
Cried to his God for mercy on his soul,
And lost his footing. Down amid the rocks
He fell—and fell again, and all was o'er,

When Vere descended by the usual path
And found his friend, the breath of life had fled;

The skull was fractured, but his face unhurt,
Seem'd as he slumber'd, while his stiff cold hand
Still held the fatal sword-stick in his grasp.
They brought the body to the Cabaret,
And on the third day laid him in his grave.
I thought, at times, two other deaths would fill
The awful measure of this tragedy.
That Vere's remorse, contrition, and despair,
At his unhappy, but most innocent act,
Would end his days. Yet though his grief was great,
'Twas nothing to the misery I saw
When Huntley's mother, young and beautiful,
Although her son was twenty years of age,—
Hasten'd from London to behold the grave
Where they had lain her darling. Let me close
The sad recital:—language fails to tell
The holy madness of a grief like hers.

COX (BROS.) AND WYMAN, PRINTERS, GREAT QUEEN-STREET.

Voices from the Mountains.

Voices from the Mountains.

MOUNTAIN STREAMS.

AN ASPIRATION FROM TOWN.

WHAT time the fern puts forth its rings,
What time the early throstle sings,
I love to fly the murky town,
And tread the moorlands, bare and brown;
From greenest level of the glens
To barest summit of the Bens,
To trace the torrents where they flow,
Serene or brawling, fierce or slow;
To linger pleased, and loiter long,
A silent listener to their song.

Farewell, ye streets! Again I'll sit
On crags to watch the shadows flit;
To list the buzzing of the bee,
Or branches waving like a sea;
To hear far off the cuckoo's note,
Or lark's clear carol high afloat,

And find a joy in every sound,
Of air, the water, or the ground;
Of fancies full, though fixing nought,
And thinking—heedless of my thought.

Farewell! and in the teeth of care
I'll breathe the buxom mountain air,
Feed vision upon dyes and hues
That from the hill-top interfuse,
White rocks, and lichens born of spray,
Dark heather-tufts, and mosses grey,
Green grass, blue sky, and boulders brown,
With amber waters glistening down,
And early flowers, blue, white, and pink,
That fringe with beauty all the brink.

Farewell, ye streets! Beneath an arch
Of drooping birch or feathery larch,
Or mountain-ash, that o'er it bends,
I'll watch some streamlet as it wends;
Some brook whose tune its course betrays,
Whose verdure tracks its hidden ways—
Verdure of trees and bloom of flowers,
And music fresher than the showers,
Soft dripping where the tendrils twine;
And all its beauty shall be mine.

Ay, mine, to bring me joy and health,
And endless store of mental wealth—
Wealth ever given to hearts that warm
To loveliness of sound or form,

And that can see in Nature's face
A hope, a beauty, and a grace—
That in the city or the woods,
In thoroughfares or solitudes,
Can live their life at Nature's call,
Despising nothing, loving all.

Sweet streams, that over summits leap,
Or fair in rock-hewn basins sleep;
That foaming burst in bright cascades,
Or toy with cowslips in the shades;
That shout till earth and sky grow mute,
Or tinkle lowly as a lute;
That sing a song of lusty joy,
Or murmur like a love-lorn boy;
That creep or fall, that flow or run—
I dote upon you every one.

For many a day of calm delight,
And hour of pleasure stol'n from night;
For morning freshness, joy of noon,
And beauty rising with the moon;
For health, encrimsoner of cheeks,
And wisdom gain'd on mountain-peaks;
For inward light from Nature won,
And visions gilded by the sun;
For fancies fair and waking dreams—
I love you all, ye mountain streams.

MELODIES AND MYSTERIES.

Wouldst thou know what the blithe bird pipeth,
  High in the morning air?
Wouldst thou know what the bright stream singeth,
  Rippling o'er pebbles bare?
Sorrow the mystery shall teach thee,
  And the words declare.

Wouldst thou find in the rose's blossom
  More than thy fellows find?
More in the fragrance of the lily
  Than odour on the wind?
Love Nature, and her smallest atoms
  Shall whisper to thy mind.

Wouldst thou know what the moon discourseth
  To the docile sea?
Wouldst hear the echoes of the music
  Of the far infinity?
Sorrow shall ope the founts of knowledge,
  And heaven shall sing to thee.

Wouldst thou see through the riddle of Being
  Further than others can?
Sorrow shall give thine eyes new lustre
  To simplify the plan;
And love of God and thy kind shall aid thee
  To end what it began.

To Love and Sorrow all Nature speaketh;
If the riddle be read,
They the best can see through darkness
Each divergent thread
Of its mazy texture, and discover
Whence the ravel spread.

Love and Sorrow are sympathetic
With the earth and skies;
Their touch from the harp of Nature bringeth
The hidden melodies;
To them the eternal chords for ever
Vibrate in harmonies.

THE MAN IN THE DEAD SEA.

AN APOLOGUE.

Walking on the Dead Sea shore,
Meditating evermore,
Underneath the burning ray
Of intolerable day,
I beheld a fearful thing—
Bloody deed as e'er was done,
Wrought, unblushing, unrelenting,
In the presence of the sun.

Fair, and young, and bright was he,
Who that morning walk'd with me
By the margin of the sea;
Calm, and eloquent, and wise,
Radiant in immortal youth;
Knowledge sparkled in his eyes,
From his forehead living truth.
He was a youth indeed divine,
A master and a friend of mine,
For whose dear sake I would have given
All on the mortal side of heaven.

We talk'd together and paced along;
We did no mortal creature wrong;
And sometimes sitting on the sands,
Or on the jutting rocks below,
He look'd at me, and clasp'd my hands,
And told me things I ought to know—

Things of heaven and things of earth,
Things of wisdom and of mirth;
The wisdom cheerful, the mirth most wise,
And both brimful of mysteries.

There came a woman by the way—
A stately woman, proud and strong;
Her robe of purple velvet shone,
Like a starry night, with precious stone,
And trail'd the sands as she swept along.
She wore a dagger at her side,
Jewel-hilted, bright, and keen:
You might have told, by her crown of gold,
This gorgeous woman was a queen;
But more by her eyes, that flash'd the fire
Of one accustom'd to control;
To rule in awe, and give the law
That binds the body and the soul.
And, in her train, there follow'd her
A well-arm'd troop of stalwart men,
So bloody and bare, I do not care
Ever to see their like again.

My friend arose and look'd at her;
Calm and beautiful he stood,
With such magnificence of eye
As God but gives unto the good.
She scowl'd at him; each quivering limb
In all her body spake her wrath;
And her fearful tongue loud curses flung
At the mild presence in her path:

"Monster of evil! fiend of guile!
What brings thee here to blast my sight?
But since thou darest, in the day,
To meet and brave me in the way,
We'll try thy power—we'll know thy right."

"Lady," he said, and mildly spoke,
While heavenly beauty lit his face,
"My God hath made me what I am,
And given me an abiding-place;
And if my presence please thee not,
The world is wide—thou need'st not come
To slay me in each quiet spot,
Where I have sanctified a home.
Thou'st taken from me wide domains,
And follow'd me with hate and scorn;
Enjoy thine own—let me alone—
I wait in patience for the Morn."

A frenzy flush'd her burning brow,
A rage too mighty to contain;
Her nostrils widen'd, and seem'd to smoke;
She grasp'd her neck as she would choke,
And then, like one who suffer'd pain,
Her trembling lips she did compress;
Her cheeks grew cold and colourless.
But soon the madness of her blood
Boil'd in her bosom where she stood;
Her eyes seem'd coals of living flame,
And incoherent curses came,
Gasping and gurgling, from her mouth;—
Never tornado of the south

Made half the wreck as, in that hour,
She would have made, had she the power.

My friend stood by, with folded arms,
  Serene, and innocent, and pure;
And when she saw that he but smiled
  At all her hate, she could endure
No longer on his face to look,
  But smote it with her jewell'd hand:
"Insensate wretch!" she fiercely said,
  "Let me not slay thee where I stand;
I will not stab thee to the heart,
  Lest, in my haste, I mar delight,
And thou shouldst die and end thy pain
  Too suddenly before my sight.
Not yet thy venomous blood shall flow,
But I *will* slay thee ere I go!"

Her body-guards, so fierce and grim,
Seized his arms and pinion'd him;
And every one, with his gauntlet on,—
  An iron gauntlet, heavy to bear,—
Smote him on his cheeks and eyes,
  And bruised his lips, so ruddy fair,
Till the blood started, and over-dyed
  The bloom of his face with gory red;
And then they spat on him in spite,
  And heap'd foul curses on his head.
And he—what could he do but pray,
  And let them work their cruel will?—
Turn'd his looks to the judging sky,
  Appealing, though forgiving still.

Then from his lily skin they tore
Every vestment that he bore;
Smote him, threw him on the ground,
And his limbs with fetters bound;
Naked, helpless, and forlorn,
Mark for all their wrath and scorn;
And with lying words, accused
Of every shame, deceit, and crime;
And, when once he strove to speak,
Fill'd his mouth with sand and slime;
Stamping on him as he lay
Bound and bleeding on the way;
And I, alas! alone, alone!
Could but curse them and bemoan
That I could not, as I trod,
Grasp th' avenging bolts of God.

And as he lay upon the beach,
Deprived of motion and of speech,
The queen, that woman so proud and fierce,
Look'd upon him with feverish joy;
Her fiery glances seem'd to pierce
Through and through the bleeding boy;
She put her hand on his naked breast,
And felt his heart: "Ah! well," said she,
"It beats and beats, but shall not beat
To vex me thus incessantly."
And she drew the poniard from her side,
Slowly, calmly, sheath and all;
Unsheathed it, felt if its edge were sharp,
And dipp'd its point in poisonous gall;

And, kneeling down, with flashing face
Gazed upon him in that place.

She did *not* stab him : she grasp'd his flesh
As if she'd tear it from his bones ;
Then took the slime from his bleeding mouth,
That she might hear his piteous groans.
He faintly said, "Thou canst not kill ;
My charmèd life defies thy will."
"I can," she answer'd, whispering low ;—
"This is the death that thou shalt know.
Thy days are number'd—thy race is run ;
Thou art an insult to the sun."
And in his breast, up to the hilt,
She plunged the dagger, and wrench'd it round,
Then drew it out with a joyous cry,
And pointed to the ghastly wound ;
Then drove it in again—again,
With force redoubled every time ;
And left it sticking in his heart
For very luxury of crime.

Sense and motion left his frame,
From his lips no breathing came :
"He's dead," quoth she ; "he's dead at last,
And all my agony is past.
Take him up ! let the Dead Sea wave
Float him about without a grave !
Take him up and throw him in !
In these waters none can sink ;—
'Mid the foul naphtha let him swim,

To gorge the vultures, limb by limb,
When they come to the water's brink!
And if they come not, let him lie,
Rotting betwixt the wave and sky!—
Take him by the heels and chin,
And spit on him, and cast him in!"

They twined their coarse hands in his hair;
They took his body, so white and fair;
They spat upon his patient face,
Pale, but fill'd with heavenly grace;
They took him up, and in the sea,
They cast him ignominiously.
And the fearful woman, proud and strong,
The fiendish woman who did the wrong,
Bade clarion sound, and trumpet play,
And went exulting on her way.

A sudden wind—a treacherous wind—
Arose upon that Dead Sea shore;
The heavy waves began to swell,
To chafe, and foam, and lash, and roar;
A gloom o'erspread the clear blue sky:—
Once alone I could descry
His fair white limbs go floating by
On the crest of a distant wave;
And I sat me down upon the sand,
Wailing that I, with strong right hand,
Had not snatch'd him from the grave,
And smitten the murd'ress to the dust
Ere she sacrificed the just.

All that day the storm blew high,
And all that day I linger'd there;
There was no living thing but I
On the shore of that sad sea,
And I was moaning piteously.
Towards the night the wind blew fair,
And the silver rim of the bright new moon
Shone in a deep cerulean air,
And look'd at itself in the salt lagoon.
And there was silence, cold as death;
Not a motion but my breath.

Long I sat upon the shore,
Brooding on that cruel wrong,
Wondering if for evermore
The evil thing should be the strong:
When I heard a sudden sound,
And saw a phosphorescent track
On the breast of the waves so dull and black.
I listen'd—I could plainly hear
The measured stroke, precise and clear,
Of a swimmer swimming near:—
I look'd—I saw the floating locks,
The face upturn'd, the bosom brave,
The calm full eyes, that look'd on me
Through the darkness of the sea;
The strong limbs, battling with the wave:—
I saw the motion—I heard the breath,
I knew his victory over death.

It was my friend, my living friend;
I clasp'd him, clad him, wept for joy.
"They may think," he said, "to strike me dead,
They can but wound me—not destroy.
The strongest bands, the fastest chain,
On my free limbs will not remain;
For the deepest wounds that hate can strike,
I find a healing in the air;
Even poison'd weapons cannot kill;
They're powerless on the life I bear.
And she, whose hate pursues me still,
A queen superb, of lofty line,
Shall have her day, then fade away,
And all her empire shall be mine."

THE FOLLOWER.

I.

"Why dost thou look so sad and wan?
And why art thou so woe-begone?
Why dost thou mutter words of fear?
Do I not love thee, father dear?
Is not earth a place of joy?
Tell me, father, tell thy boy."

II.

"There is a fiend doth follow me;
A fearful fiend thou canst not see,—
But I behold him. Day or night
He is not absent from my sight:
I know thou lovest me, O my child,—
But this demon drives me wild.

III.

"The world was once both good and fair,
There was a glory in the air,
When my heart was pure and young,
By guilt and misery unwrung;
But a demon such as this,
Makes an agony of bliss.

IV.

"He besets my daily path,
I am the victim of his wrath;
He smears his fingers o'er my meat,
And poisons everything I eat;
Puts fatal acid in my drink—
Oh, it is misery to think!

V.

"He lies beside me in my bed;
He places thorns beneath my head;
He sits upon my suffering breast,
And sends the dreams that mar my rest;
He tracks my steps where'er I stray,
And gibes and mocks me night and day.

VI.

"When sympathetic friends condole,
And whisper comfort to my soul,
This spiteful devil comes to and fro,
And turns each friend into a foe;
Perverts my comfort into pain,
Maddening my heart and brain.

VII.

"When I think I'm all alone,
I start to hear his mocking groan;
I see his fearful face and eyes,—
That hellish face which multiplies,

And fills the room from roof to floor
With scowling demons evermore,

VIII

"Cruel is he; his power is great;
He pursues me; he is fate.
If I look to heaven, and pray,
I see his dreadful shape mid-way;
And ev'n the placid stars assume
His sneering likeness in the gloom.

IX.

"He leads my steps to dark, deep pools,
And says, 'None live but wretched fools.'
He puts sharp weapons in my sight,
And shows me poison, ruby bright,
And whispers, if I like him not,
How soon my freedom may be got.

X.

"At times I think my heart will break;
But I resist him for thy sake:
His power departs when thou art near—
Of thy sweet face he stands in fear;
And if thou'lt love me, O my boy,
I'll grapple with him, and destroy."

XI.

"Father, I love thee: I will pray
For strength to drive this fiend away.

And if thou wilt be bold of heart,
I know the demon will depart;
And I will walk with thee abroad,
And scare him with the name of God.

XII.

"I'll lie beside thee in the night,
He shall not come to plague thy sight.
Why should his face fill up the skies
With hideousness and mockeries?
There are fair faces up in heaven,
That always smile on the forgiven.

XIII.

"They beam upon us: they are strong:
This fiend shall not resist them long.
We'll see them in the stars and moon,
We'll see them in the sun at noon;
We'll see them in the leaves and flowers,
And hear them singing 'mid the bowers.

XIV.

"He is but one: why should we fear,
When smiling angels fill the sphere?
And one among them known to thee—
Chief angel of *my* memory—
My mother, dead, and gone before!"—
"Talk thus, my child, I'll fear no more.

XV.

"Thy heart is pure, thy speech is mild,
I gain instruction from a child:
The fiend that haunts me must depart,—
He cannot vex me where thou art—
Thy mother's memory! God! and thee!
The fiend has fled—my soul is free!"

WE ARE WISER THAN WE KNOW.

THOU, who in the midnight silence
Lookest to the orbs on high,
Feeling humbled, yet elated,
In the presence of the sky;
Thou, who minglest with thy sadness
Pride ecstatic, awe divine,
That even *thou* canst trace their progress
And the law by which they shine,—
Intuition shall uphold thee,
Ev'n though Reason drag thee low;
Lean on faith, look up rejoicing—
We are wiser than we know.

Thou, who hearest plaintive music,
Or sweet songs of other days;
Heaven-revealing organs pealing,
Or clear voices hymning praise,
And wouldst weep, thou know'st not wherefore,
Though thy soul is steep'd in joy,
And the world looks kindly on thee,
And thy bliss hath no alloy,—
Weep, nor seek for consolation,
Let the heaven-sent droplets flow,
They are hints of mighty secrets—
We are wiser than we know!

Thou, who in the noon-time brightness
Seest a shadow undefined;
Hear'st a voice that indistinctly
Whispers caution to thy mind:
Thou, who hast a vague foreboding
That a peril may be near,
Even when Nature smiles around thee,
And thy Conscience holds thee clear,
Trust the warning—look before thee—
Angels may the mirror show,
Dimly still, but sent to guide thee—
We are wiser than we know.

Countless chords of heavenly music,
Struck ere earthly time began,
Vibrate in immortal concord
Through the answering soul of man:
Countless rays of heavenly glory
Shine through spirit pent in clay,
On the wise men at their labours,
On the children at their play.
Man has gazed on heavenly secrets,
Sunn'd himself in heavenly glow,
Seen the glory; heard the music;—
We are wiser than we know.

THE CHILD AND THE MOURNERS.

A LITTLE child, beneath a tree,
Sat and chanted cheerily
A little song, a pleasant song,
Which was—she sang it all day long—
"When the wind blows, the blossoms fall,
But a good God reigns over all!"

There pass'd a lady by the way,
Moaning in the face of day:
There were tears upon her cheek,
Grief in her heart too great to speak;
Her husband died but yester-morn,
And left her in the world forlorn.

She stopp'd and listen'd to the child,
That look'd to Heaven, and, singing, smiled;
And saw not, for her own despair,
Another lady, young and fair,
Who, also passing, stopp'd to hear
The infant's anthem ringing clear.

For she, but few sad days before,
Had lost the little babe she bore;

And grief was heavy at her soul,
As that sweet memory o'er her stole,
And show'd how bright had been the Past,
The Present drear and overcast.

And as they stood beneath the tree,
Listening, soothed, and placidly,
A youth came by, whose sunken eyes
Spake of a load of miseries;
And he, arrested like the twain,
Stopp'd to listen to the strain.

Death had bow'd the youthful head
Of his bride beloved, his bride unwed:
Her marriage robes were fitted on,
Her fair young face with blushes shone,
When the destroyer smote her low,
And left the lover to his woe.

And these three listen'd to the song,
Silver-toned, and sweet, and strong,
Which that child, the live-long day,
Chanted to itself in play:
"When the wind blows, the blossoms fall,
But a good God reigns over all."

The widow's lips impulsive moved;
The mother's grief, though unreproved,
Soften'd, as her trembling tongue
Repeated what the infant sung;
And the sad lover, with a start,
Conn'd it over to his heart.

And though the child—if child it were,
And not a seraph, sitting there—
Was seen no more, the sorrowing three
Went on their way resignedly,
The song still ringing in their ears—
Was it music of the spheres?

Who shall tell? They did not know.
But in the midst of deepest woe
The strain recurr'd when sorrow grew,
To warn them, and console them too:
"When the wind blows, the blossoms fall,
But a good God reigns over all."

THE WATER TARANTELLA.

"The condition of those who were afflicted with Tarantism was in many cases united with so great a sensibility to music, that at the very first tone of their favourite melodies they sprang up shouting for joy, and danced on without intermission, until they sank on the ground exhausted, and almost lifeless. Some loved to hear the sound of water, and delighted in hearing of gushing springs, and rushing cascades and streams."—*Hecker's Epidemics of the Middle Ages. The Dancing Mania.*

THE wind blows low on the fields and hedges,
There is a murmur amid the sedges,
A low sweet sound where the water gushes
Forth from the grass amid the rushes;
It is a streamlet small and young,
It loves to dally the mosses among,
It trickles slowly,
It whispers lowly,
On its breast the thistle drops its down,
The water-lily
So white and stilly
Sleeps in its lap till its leaves grow brown

Dance, poor Eveleen, dance and dream,—
Soft is the music, and fresh the stream.

We will follow thee where it flows—
It leaves the sedges dank behind,
And on its fringe a willow shows
Its silvery leaflets to the wind;
And a brook comes down from far away,
And babbles into it all the day;
And both together creep through meads
Where the shy plover hides and feeds,
And then away through fields of corn,
Or stretch of meadows newly shorn:
Noiselessly they flow and clear
By open wold and cover'd brake;
But if you listen, you may hear
The steady music which they make.

Dance, poor Eveleen, dance,—we follow,
O'er field, and copse, and wild-wood hollow.

And now the stream begins to run
Over the pebbles in its bed,
To rumple its breast and glance in the sun,
And curl to the light breeze overhead.
No longer loitering, lingering, calm,
It hurries away o'er the chafing shingle,
Humming a song, singing a psalm,
Through the orchard, down the dingle.
Pools like mirrors adorn its breast,
And there the trout and the minnow rest;
The ringdove sings in her nest alone
The tender song that love has taught her;
And the redbreast sits on the boulder-stone,
Washing his plumes in the wimpling water.

Brisker now let the music sound;
Dance, Eveleen, dance,—we follow thee ever,
And tread the ground with a quick rebound,
Away, away with the rolling river!

Fed by its tributary rills
From distant valleys with circling hills,
And travelling seaward, merrily brawling,
Wild, impassion'd, rapid, and strong,
With voice of power to the green woods calling,
The impetuous river dashes along,
And is sweeping, leaping, through the meadows
Almost as fast as the driving shadows
Of clouds that fly before the wind,
Down to the chasmy precipices,
There to burst in foaming fall:—
It bursts, it thunders, it roars, it hisses,
An iris is its coronal;
And the pendulous trees above it shiver,
Bathed by the rain of that rampant river.

So dance, fair Eveleen, faster, faster;
Unloose thy zone, thy locks untwine;—
Thy bosom, no more like the alabaster,
Is flush'd, and heated, and red like wine;
Thy pulse is beating, thy blood is heating
Thy lips are open, thine eyeballs shine.

And now the river spends its wrath,
The music sinks, the winds blow low;
Its bosom broad is a nation's path—
Smooth and pleasant is its flow.

A boat shoots by with its rowers trim,
A ferryman plies his lazy oar;
And miles adown, in the distance dim,
There stands a city on the shore.

By corn-fields yellow, by meadows green,
And stately gardens, we advance;
Still we follow thee, Eveleen—
Gentle, gentler, be thy dance.

Behold, upon a grassy lawn,
Sloped smoothly downwards to the brink,
With large soft eyes, a dapple fawn
Stoops to the lucid wave to drink;
And, lo! an avenue of oak,
Whose wrinkled stems, of giant girth,
Have stood unarm'd the winter's stroke
For thrice a century, firm in earth,
Their boughs o'ertopp'd by the turrets hoary
Of a mansion old and famed in story.

They pass, all pass,
As in magic glass,
And still we trace the placid stream—
Castle and tower,
And park and bower;
Dance, poor Eveleen, dance and dream.

A hundred ships are in the river,
Their tall masts point to a clear blue sky,
Their sails are furl'd, their pennants curl'd,

To the sweet west wind that wantons by;
And every flag, emblazon'd fair,
Flaps at its will on the sunny air.
There is a peal of Sabbath bells,
Over the river's breast it swells;
The tall proud steeples look calmly down
On the quiet houses of the town;
'Tis a day of love, of rest, of peace—
Eveleen, the song must cease.

Gently, Eveleen, gently rest,
Softly on thy pillow sleep;
The fit is o'er, thy heaving breast
Will calm itself in slumber deep;
Thou'st danced, poor maid, the tarantelle,
Thou'st danced it long and danced it well;
Thou'st trod the maze, and traced the shore;
Thou shalt be heal'd for evermore.

THE EARTH AND THE STARS.

SAID the Earth to the Stars—"Oh my sisters,
Fellow-travellers through this dread immensity,
Send a voice to my spirit and declare,
If, serenely as ye smile on me, and fair,
Ye are dwellings for all miseries, like me?

"Oh tell me if in you, my glorious sisters,
Rules a tyrant like the one enthronèd here?
If Death has ever enter'd in your climes,
And Suffering, and Calamity, and Crimes
Ever rob you of the children that you rear?

"Oh tell me if in you, my myriad sisters,
The weak are ever trampled by the strong?
If Malice, and Intolerance, and Hate,
And Warfare, and Ambition to be great,
Ever cause the Right to suffer from the Wrong?

"Oh tell me, silent sisters, are ye happy?
Are the multitudes that live beneath your skies,
Full of knowledge, unaccursed by such a ban
As man has ever issued against man?
Are they happy, are they loving, are they wise?"

Said the Stars to the Earth—"Oh mournful sister,
Rolling calmly through the calm infinity,
We have roll'd for countless ages on our track,
Ever onward—pressing onward—never back;—
There is progress both for us and for thee.

"Thou wilt make, oh thou foolish little sister,
The full cycle of thy glory in thy time;
We are rolling on in ours for evermore;—
Look not backward—see Eternity before,
And free thyself of Sorrow and of Crime.

"God, who made thee, never meant thee, mournful sister,
To be fill'd with sin and grief eternally;
And the children that are born upon thy breast
Shall, in fulness of their destiny, be blest:—
There is Progress for the Stars and for Thee."

THE YOUNG EARTH.

"The earth gives signs of age, disease, and fickleness. It yields its increase grudgingly, and demands an exorbitant fee beforehand, in toil and sweat from the husbandman. It has ill turns or paroxysms, when it rouses the ocean into a tempest, and makes sport of navies, strewing the shore with the wrecks and carcases of men. It rocks a continent or sinks an island; shaking massive cities into countless fragments, and burying its wretched inhabitants in indiscriminate ruin; anon it writhes and groans in mortal agony, and finds relief only by disgorging its fiery bowels, burying cities and villages in burning graves. THE EARTH IS OLD AND FEEBLE, and must needs groan on until it renews its prime."—*Miseries and Liabilities of the present Life.*

OLD Earth? YOUNG EARTH!—though myriad years,
Since Time's primeval morn,
She may have bloom'd amid the spheres
Before a man was born!

Still young; though race succeeding race
Have trod her breast sublime,
And flourish'd in their pride of place
Their full allotted time,—

Then pass'd away, like daily things,
Nor left a trace behind
To tell how many thousand Springs
They lived before mankind.

We, who for threescore years and ten
  Toil deathwards from our birth,
Deem sixty centuries of men
  A ripe old age for Earth.

But all our deeds, though back we look
  With yearning keen and fond,
Fill but a page: the mighty book
  Lies infinite beyond.

She is not old, or waxing cold,
  But vigorous as of yore,
When 'mid her kindred globes she roll'd,
  Exulting evermore.

Six thousand years of human strife
  Are little in the sum;
A morning added to her life,
  And noonday yet to come.

Six thousand years! what have *they* brought,
  O, poor ephemeral man?
Go, reckon centuries by thought,
  Thou'lt find them but a span.

Go reckon time by progress made,
  And lo! what ages pass,
Swift as the transitory shade
  Of clouds upon the grass.

Six thousand years! and what are they?
A cycle scarce begun;
The fragment of a grander day
Unmeasured by the sun;

Too short to purify the sight
Of souls in Error blind;
Too short to show the healing light
Of Love to all mankind.

For lo! the lesson has been read
In every clime and tongue;
The Sea has breathed it from her bed,
And Earth and Air have sung;

The Sun has beam'd it from above
To all his worlds around;
The stars have preach'd that God is Love:
But answer never found.

The generations cold and dark
Have lived and pass'd away,
And never caught the faintest spark
Of Love's eternal ray.

The myriads, seeking to create
An idol to adore,
Have made their God a God of Hate,
And worshipp'd him with gore.

And living multitudes have heard
That Love is Nature's plan,
Yet shut their souls against the Word
That teaches love to man.

But there is progress in the spheres,
The glorious Earth is young;
The seed has lain six thousand years,
The tender shoots have sprung.

She is not old but young and fair;
And marching to her prime,
Her teeming bosom yet shall bear
The harvest of her time.

And generations thought-endued—
Each wiser than the last,
Shall crowd, in one short year the good
Of centuries of the past;—

Shall, living, aid by loving deeds
The truths for which we pine,
And, dying, sow the fruitful seeds
Of impulse more divine.

The struggle, long and sorely fought,
Embitter'd as it spread,
For simplest rights—free hand, free thought,
And sustenance of bread:

The struggle of the righteous weak
  Against the unrighteous strong;
Of Justice firm, though mild and meek,
  Against oppressive Wrong—

Draws in, and must be ended yet;—
  It ripens to its hour:
The mighty combatants have met;
  And Truth has challenged Power.

Young Earth!—her sad six thousand years,
  Now passing swift away,
Are but her infancy of tears—
  The dawn before the day.

THE GOLDEN MADNESS.

THE GOLDEN MADNESS.

By the road-side there sat an aged man,
Who all day long, from dawn into the night,
Counted with weary fingers heaps of stones.
His red eyes dropp'd with rheum, his yellow hands
Trembled with palsy, his pale sunken cheeks
Were mark'd with deep and venerable seams,
His flat bald brow was ever bent to earth,
His few grey hairs waved to the passing winds,
His straggling teeth, blacken'd and carious,
Rattled and tumbled from his bloodless gums;—
I spake him kindly, saying, "Why this toil
At task like this, cracking thy rotten bones,
To gain nor health, nor recompense, nor thanks?"

He made no answer, but went counting on,
Mumbling and muttering slowly to himself,
Chinking the stones with melancholy sound,
Piece after piece; looking nor right nor left,
Nor upwards, but aye down upon the heap.

I asked again, "What is it that thou dost,
Wasting the remnant of thy days in toil,
Without fruition to thyself or kind,
As earnestly as if these stones were gold,
And all thine own to spend and to enjoy?"

He look'd upon me with a vacant eye,
And stopp'd not in his task. "Gold! didst thou say?
They *are* gold—precious, ready-coin'd and pure,
And all mine own to spend and to enjoy,
When I have counted them. So, get thee gone,
Unless thou art a borrower or a thief."
And aye he chink'd the flints and chips of slate,
One after one, muttering their numbers o'er,
At every hundred stopping for a while
To rub his wither'd palms, and eye the heap
With idiot happiness, ere he resumed.

There came a stranger by the way. I ask'd
If he knew aught of this forlorn old man.
"Right well," he said; "the creature is insane,
And hath been ever since he had a beard.
He first went mad for greediness of gold."

"Know you his story?" "Perfectly," said he.
"Look how he counts his miserable flints
And bits of slate. Twelve mortal hours each day
He sits at work, summer and winter both;
'Mid storm or sunshine, heat or nipping frost,
He counts and counts; and since his limbs were young,
Till now that he is crook'd and stiffen'd old,
He hath not miss'd a day. The silly wretch
Believes each stone a lump of shining gold,
And that he made a bargain with the fiend,
That if he'd count one thousand million coins
Of minted gold, audibly, one by one,
The gold should be his own the very hour

When he had told the thousand millionth piece;
Provided always, as such bargains go,
The fiend should have his soul in recompense.

"Unskilled in figures, but brimful of greed,
He chuckled at his bargain, and began;
And for a year reckon'd with hopeful heart.
At last a glimpse of light broke on his sense,
And show'd the fool that millions—quickly said—
Were not so quickly counted as he thought.
But still he plies his melancholy task,
Dreaming of boundless wealth and curbless power,
And slavish worship from his fellow-men.

"If he could reckon fifty thousand stones
Daily, and miss no day in all the year,
'Twould take him five-and-fifty years of life
To reach the awful millions he desires.
He has been fifty of these years or more
Feeding his coward soul with this conceit,
Exposed to every blast, starved, wretched, old,
Toothless, and clothed with rags and squalidness,
He eyes his fancied treasure with delight,
And thinks to cheat the devil at the last.

"Look at his drivelling lips, his bloodshot eyes,
His trembling hands, his loose and yellow skin,
His flimsy rottenness, and own with me
That this man's madness, though a piteous thing,
Deserves no pity, for the avarice
So mean and filthy that was cause of it."

* * * * *

I gazed once more upon his wrinkled face,
Vacant with idiotcy, and went my way
Fill'd with disgust and sorrow, for I deem'd
That his great lunacy was but a type
Of many a smaller madness as abject,
That daily takes possession of men's hearts
And blinds them to the uses of their life.

Poor fool! he gathers stones—they gather gold,
With toil and moil, thick sweat and grovelling thought.
He has his flints, and they acquire their coin.
And who's the wiser? Neither he nor they.

THE OUT-COMER AND THE IN-GOER.

For Ernest was a palace built,
A palace beautiful to see;
Marble-porch'd and cedar-chamber'd,
Hung with damask drapery;
Boss'd with ornaments of silver,
Interlaid with gems and gold;
Fill'd with carvings, from cathedrals
Rescued in the days of old;
Eloquent with books and pictures,
All that luxury could afford;
Warm with statues that Pygmalion
Might have fashion'd and adored.
In his forest glades and vistas
Lovely were the light and gloom;
Fountains sparkled in his gardens,
And exotics breathed perfume.

With him to that lordly palace
Went the friend who loved him best,
In good fortune unexalted,
In misfortune undepress'd.
Little reck'd that friend of grandeur;
Dearer far to him than all
Wealth could offer, were the rosebuds
Growing on the garden wall.

Dearer far were simple pleasures,
And the charms by Nature spread,
Than all gauds of power and splendour
Heap'd upon their favourite's head.
Plain was he in speech and raiment,
Humble-minded, and imbued
With a daily love of virtue,
And a daily gratitude.

Ere these palace-halls received them,
Steadfast was the faith they bore;
No estrangement came between them,
Darkening their study-door.
Ernest in his friend's communion
Loved himself and all his kind,
Cherishing a loving nature,
Tutor'd by a happy mind;
Rich and poor were equal brothers
In that heart, too pure to hold
Pride of lineage or station,
Or the vanity of gold.
Never chanced it, in that season,
That he form'd a thought unjust
Of the meanest fellow-mortal,
Fashion'd of a common dust.

But his palace somewhat changed him;
Rosebuds gather'd—early walks
Sunset roamings—nightly musings—
Mystic philosophic talks—

Nothing as of old engross'd him;
And the promptings of his friend
Fell upon his sated spirit,
Not to guide him, but offend.
Daily grew the chilling coolness,
Till, ere many months had flown,
Ernest shut his door upon him,
And resolved to live alone:
And retreating 'mid his splendour,
Rooted out all love he bore
For that friend, so true, so noble,
Banish'd, lost for evermore.

Scarcely had his friend departed,
Pain'd and pensive, but resign'd,
When another sought the palace
More accordant to his mind.
He in Ernest's lordly chambers
Sat, and call'd him first of men;
Praised his pictures and his statues,
Flatter'd him with tongue and pen;
Press'd the milk of human kindness
From his bosom cold and sere,
Taught him to be harsh and cruel,
Proud, disdainful, and austere;
Fill'd him up with vain inflation,
And contempt for meaner clay,
As if *he* were born to govern,
It to flatter and obey.

Sometimes on his lonely pillow,
When his conscience show'd the truth,

He deplored his blind estrangement
From the comrade of his youth;
But the daylight chill'd the current
Of that feeling, and it froze
Hard enough to bear the burden
Of such memories as those.
And all day, in gloomy grandeur,
In his corridors and halls,
Looking at his old escutcheons,
And the portraits on the walls,
He and his companion wander'd,
Calm of eye, with lips upcurl'd,
Aliens to the worth and goodness,
And the beauty of the world.

Wintry winds of human anguish,
Blowing round them day and night,
Never moved them—never clouded
Their serenity of light.
They were made of choice material,
Tempest-proof, from lightning free,
And the world, its joys and sorrows,
Was to them a shipless sea,
Dark, unfathomable, trackless,
Far beyond their care or ken,
Save at times, when ostentation
Brought them to the gaze of men.
But ev'n this was painful to them—
Man was cold, and earth was wide;
They preferr'd the warm seclusion
Of their apathy and pride.

Who was he, the first out-goer?
He was Human Sympathy;
And the in-comer, that displaced him?
He was Worldly Vanity.
With the first Religion vanish'd,
Charity, and Faith in Man,
And the genial Love of Nature,
Boundless as Creation's plan.
With the second enter'd Hatred
Harsh Intolerance, and Scorn.
Ernest, in his life's cold evening
Saw the error of his morn—
Saw his error and deplored it,
And upon his death-bed lain,
Pray'd for mercy, while confessing,
Dying, he had lived in vain.

THE DROP OF AMBROSIA.

"Whither away? whither away,
With thine eyes through the distance looking so keen?
The road is narrow, and is not long,
And if thou wouldst but awhile delay,
I would show thee sights thou hast not seen;
And thou shouldst hear a voice of song,
And thou shouldst learn of things unknown,
And live a double and fuller life.
Whither away? I prithee stay,—
There are angels near; thou'rt not alone—
The very air is with beauty rife.
The night is lovely, fair is the day,
Why this hurry to travel away,
To close thy journey, to shut thy book?
Why at the end wilt thou ever look?
Why on the tide wilt thou ever think,
And neglect the flow'rets on the brink?"

He said, in answer to my cries,
"Let me alone, nor vex my soul;
I've set my mind on a glittering prize
That I see midway towards the goal.
It shines, 'mid cloud on the mountain-top,
A bright, divine, ambrosial drop.

Sad, till I grasp it, the time appears;
Into hours the weeks I'd pack,
Compress the lingering, drawling years
To months, and never wish them back.
Why should I stay? What boots delay?
What do I care for an angel's song?
For the stars of night, or the flowers of day,
When lingering would the hours prolong?
Let me alone: my mind and heart
Are full of a joy thou canst not see,
And each impediment is pain;
Thy very talk is grief to me.
Let me away. Why should I stay,
Wasting time by answering thee?"

"Already," said I, "thy prime is past,
Thy flush of youth, thy warmth of noon;
And many delights which the sunshine cast
Must wither away beneath the moon.
The path thou goest is short at best;
And between thine eyes and the bliss they crave,
To trip thy feet in their course so fleet,
May there not be an open grave?
Why wilt thou hurry towards the end?
There are pleasant fields on the highway-side,
Bowers whence the hymns of Love ascend,
And rivers rolling a joyous tide,
In which to lave the weary limbs
Is bliss beyond the ambrosial drop
Which, far away, 'mid storm and dark,
Thou seest upon the mountain-top.

Straight is the path to the yawning tomb;
But we may linger on the road,
And turn to the left, and turn to the right,
To enjoy the kindly gifts of God.
I would not live *my* life so soon;
I would not spend it on *one* desire;
Nor in such fearful haste as thine
Exhaust the fuel of its fire."

Vain was my speech: he closed his ears—
Straight on he rush'd, nor look'd behind.
He saw afar his glittering star,
The prize for which his spirit pined.
On every side were stars as fair—
Fairer I thought; and drops of joy,
Divinest given to mortal man,
To cheer of his life the little span,
And sanctify its right employ.
He saw them not, but ran his race
With a speed that passion alone could give;
Grew hard and grey on his narrow way,
And spent his life ere he learn'd to live.
And I saw before he reach'd his prize,
That he sunk in the grave before my eyes.

NOW.

THE venerable Past is past;
'Tis dark, and shines not in the ray:
'Twas good, no doubt—'tis gone at last--
There dawns another day.
Why should we sit where ivies creep,
And shroud ourselves in charnels deep;
Or the world's Yesterdays deplore,
'Mid crumbling ruins, mossy hoar?
Why should we see with dead men's eyes,
Looking at Was from morn to night,
When the beauteous Now, the divine To Be,
Woo with their charms our living sight?
Why should we hear but echoes dull,
When the world of sound, so beautiful,
Will give us music of our own?
Why in the darkness will we grope,
When the sun, in heaven's resplendent cope
Shines as bright as ever it shone?

Abraham saw no brighter stars
Than those which burn for thee and me.
When Homer heard the lark's sweet song,
Or night-bird's lovelier melody,
They were such sounds as Shakspeare heard,
Or Chaucer, when he bless'd the bird;

Such lovely sounds as we can hear;—
Great Plato saw the vernal year
Send forth its tender flowers and shoots,
And luscious autumn pour its fruits;
And we can see the lilies blow,
The corn-fields wave, the rivers flow:
For us all bounties of the earth,
For us its wisdom, love, and mirth,
If we daily walk in the sight of God,
And prize the gifts He has bestow'd.

We will not dwell amid the graves,
  Nor in dim twilights sit alone,
To gaze at moulder'd architraves,
  Or plinths and columns overthrown;
We will not only see the light
  Through painted windows, cobwebb'd o'er,
Nor know the beauty of the night,
  Save by the moonbeam on the floor:
But in the presence of the sun,
  Or moon, or stars, our hearts shall glow;
We'll look at nature face to face,
  And we shall LOVE because we KNOW.
The present needs us. Every age
Bequeaths the next, for heritage,
No lazy luxury or delight,
But strenuous labour for the right;
For Now, the child and sire of Time,
  Demands the deeds of earnest men,
To make it better than the Past,
  And stretch the circle of its ken.

Now is a fact that men deplore,
Though it might bless them evermore,
Would they but fashion it aright:
'Tis ever new, 'tis ever bright.
  Time nor Eternity hath seen
A repetition of delight
  In all its phases: ne'er hath been
For men or angels that which *is;*
  And that which *is,* hath ceased to be
Ere we have breathed it, and its place
  Is lost in the Eternity.
But Now is ever good and fair,
Of the Infinitude the heir,
And we of it. So let us live,
That from the Past we may receive
Light for the Now; from Now a joy
That Fate nor Time shall e'er destroy.

THE VISION OF MOCKERY.

All happy things are earnest. Once I roam'd
In England, or in Dream-land, through the streets
Of a huge, buzzing, dense metropolis.
Slowly, in teeming thoroughfares, I walk'd,
One of the people, hearing with their ears,
Beholding with their eyes, and in their thought
Divining, till my soul was fill'd with grief
At all that I beheld, and felt, and knew.

It was a gibing, laughing, sneering crowd,
Devoid of truth, faith, love, and earnestness,
Except a horrid earnestness for gain;
Fierce love of lucre, which if one had not,
He was despised and trodden down of men:
Which if one had, he was adored of all,
Placed on a pinnacle to be admired,
Flatter'd, and fill'd with other rich men's gifts;
His overflowing fulness made more full,
His vulgarness thought choice gentility,
His vices virtues, and his prejudice
Wisdom innate, his coarse words oracles,
And he a chief and model of mankind.

But for all else than wealth these swarming crowds
Had slight regard; and when their daily toil

In search of it was done, and time hung loose,
They gather'd in their clubs and theatres,
In market-place, or corner of the streets,
And mock'd and gibed—and held the best buffoon
The wisest man, so he but made them laugh.
Nothing was holy to these wretched crowds,
But all things food for jest and ribald wit,
Caricature, lampoon, and mockery.

I said to one, "Is this the end of life?
Is there no reverence for God or man?"
He turn'd and look'd, and, with a well-bred stare,
Eyed me askance: "What would you have?" quoth he;
"We keep our reverence for sabbath-days,
And look demure the seventh part of our time;
If for six days we toil, six nights we laugh,
And who shall blame us? What new bore art thou,
From lands hyperborean, that canst think
Laughter a crime?"—"Nay," I replied, "not so;
Laughter is virtuous, if there be a cause:
But mockery!"—Thereat he smiled again,
Arching his eyebrows, that his eyes, full-stretch'd,
Might take the measure of my littleness,
And disappear'd amid the gathering throng.

I spake no more, but wander'd wearily on,
Until I reach'd a wide and crowded mart,
Where one, a mild and venerable man,
Address'd the multitude with slow, clear voice.
Few gave him audience, but he heeded not,
And spoke his thought, unmindful of the jeers

Of would-be wits and shallow mountebanks,
Scoffers and punsters, and obese dull clowns.

"Vain and unhappy multitudes," he said,
"That gibe and sneer at every holy thing;—
Is this your law of life? Is this the end?
Lo! ye have souls immortal and sublime,
To be made infinite in love and light,
And heavenly knowledge, if ye will but ope
The inner fountains and the inner eyes,
And see the deep and full significance,
The worth and wherefore of the life of man.

"Is it not sad, O myriad, myriad souls,
Infinite and immortal as ye are,
That ye will make your own infinity
A retrogression? Immortality,
Change of vile vesture for a viler still?
That ye will circle with the feculent clay
Your life-light heavenly clear, until it burn
No fairer, to the outward world, than foul,
Thick exhalations of a stagnant fen?
Is it not sad, that germs which should expand
Even here, to trees of bole magnificent,
Should rot and perish in unsavoury mire;
Or, ere they rot, be eaten up by swine,—
Swine of ill passion, selfishness, and lust?
Is it not sad—a thing for bitter tears—
Unless for hope, and efforts made more strong
By seeming hopelessness—that men should live
And never know the meaning of their life?
That they should die, and never know that death

Is change, not ceasing? and that life and death
Are ebb and flow of an eternal tide,
In which the ripple may become a wave,
The wave a sea, the sea a universe?

"Alas! poor crowds, self-quench'd, self-sacrificed,
Why will ye crawl, when ye might walk erect?
Why will ye grovel, when ye might aspire?
Why will ye don foul rags, when ye might wear
Angelic vestments? Why co-herd with beasts,
And graze in fields, or wallow in the mire,
When ye might feed on manna dropp'd from heaven?"

Thereat a listener in the crowd exclaimed—
One with a portly paunch, and large round face,
And little twinkling eyes,—"You waste your words:
Why do you preach to us of things like these,
Things transcendental and absurdly wise?
The earth is man's; man is the earth's. Forget
These idle dreams, and eat, and drink, and laugh,
And speculate, and hoard a heap of gold;
And so be one of us, that as you live,
You may enjoy; and when you die, die well,
Leaving plump money-bags to bless your sons."
And all the people laugh'd, and cried, "Hear! hear!"
With loud applause, and shouts vociferous.
But still the orator undaunted stood,
Though laughter sputter'd round him; and vain scoff,
Like muddy showerlets, fell on every side;
And more he would have said, but that a cry
Of one in haste, and in great stress of speech,
Made interruption: "Lo! the children die!—

His name who made it: the fair world they tread
Is foul to them, that never saw the fields,
The green trees, the great mountains, the bright
streams,
Or knew that God, who fashion'd all things, loves
All he has made, and children most of all,
The purest from his hand. Why should they die
For life in ignorance is very death.
Some of them toil, and waste their tender limbs
In mills, or mines, from morn till past the night:
Machines of flesh, too sorely overwrought
To reach maturity ere they grow old.
Some of them toil not, but by night and day
Prowl in the fetid ways, and lie, and steal,
And curse, and never know that words can bless,
Or that such thing as blessing in this world
Was ever heard of:—Save, oh! save them all!
If not for their sakes, for our own! Not one
Of all these myriads, were we truly wise,
Should perish thus. For, though they live in sham
And fill the world with crimes and miseries.

Were mouth-piece and interpreter of men,
Exclaim'd in pompous wise, "Why should we heed?
Why interfere? It is a perilous thing
To step between a parent and his child.
Each for himself; each father for his own;
No good can come of such philosophy.
It weighs all things in theoretic scales,
And meddles but to mar. The world is good;
Let it alone; 'twill educate itself."

He ceased, and look'd about him with a smile,
That said, as plainly as a smile can say,
How smart he was, how practically wise.
Whereat another, taking up the chant,
Said, "Bah! it irks my patience evermore,
To hear such vulgar flattery of the crowd;
Were they not born to drudge, to groan, to sweat?
Is't not so written in the Book? If so,
Why give them knowledge they can never use?
A little of it is a poisonous thing,
And much is utterly beyond their reach;—
So, prithee, Master Quack, let well alone.
If thou canst sing for our amusement, sing;
Or dance, then dance; or jest, then jest away;
Stand on thy head, cut capers in the air,
Or anything thou wilt but preach of this."

Thereat the crowd laugh'd as with one accord;
And when the earnest man again essay'd
To speak his truth, they raised derisive shouts
That stifled all his words upon his lips,
And fill'd his heart and mine with pity and grief.

What more was said I know not, nor how long
I stood amongst them; but a sudden cry,
And rushing of the people to one place,
Aroused me from my lethargy, and, lo!
I heard a voice potential with the crowd,
Coarse and stentorian, breaking on my ear.
"Behold," it said, "behold the game of games,
The chance of chances—better than all trade,
Commerce, or industry pursued by man.
Who plays it well, grows wealthy in a day;
Who plays it ill may gain more great reward
Than Labour, with his utmost pith and stress,
Could sweat for in a life." And as he spake,
Loose scraps of paper flutter'd in his hands.
There seem'd deep fascination in the sight,
For every eye beseech'd, and every tongue
Implored him for them. From his vulgar clutch
They dropp'd like flakes of snow innumerous.
And then the scramble and the crush began;
Old men and young, the famish'd and the full,
The rich and poor, widow, and wife, and maid,
Master and servant, all with one intent,
Rush'd on the paper; from their eager eyes
Flashing a fierce unconquerable greed,
Their hot palms itching, all their being fill'd
With one desire; so that amid the press,
If some were crush'd and smitten to the ground,
They heeded not, but trod on fallen heads
As unconcernedly as racing steeds
Trample the sward. And still the paper flakes
Fell fast around; and still the crowd rush'd on,
Roaring and wild, its myriad hands held up

To grasp the glittering prizes ere they fell.
Then came a pause. A fearful mockery
Began to spread. Each call'd his fellow—fool!
And every fool acknowledged—so he was,
But thought his neighbour greater fool than he.
And there was laughter loud, and stifled groans,
And shouts obstreperous, till, all at once,
They dropp'd the scraps of paper from their hands,
As if a leprosy were in the touch;
And in their haste, o'er-eager to depart
From that gross presence, trod each other down.
As in a burning theatre, a crowd
Rushing by hundreds to one narrow door,
Meet certain death to flee uncertain fire,
So they in panic at the lust of gain,
That each man saw in others, not in self,
Fled in confusion, breathless and distraught,
Nor cared who died, if they themselves escaped.

I stood amazed, and blush'd for human-kind,
When on my ears a strain of music broke,
Melting in soft harmonious cadences.
I look'd, and, on a platform raised on high,
Beheld a lady beauteous as the dawn,
Dancing in robes of white and azure gauze;
Her breast was bare; her limbs, nor bare nor hid,
But full defined through her transparent robes,
Fill'd the beholders with voluptuous thoughts.
She seem'd to float upon the buoyant air,
To be a creature of an element
More spiritual than earth; and when she smiled
There was such witchery in her painted cheeks,

That all the crowd, entranced with great delight,
And quite forgetful of their past distress,
Shouted with loud acclaim, and clapp'd their hands.
And when she twirl'd upon her pliant toe,
One fair limb vertical, the other raised
To horizontal straightness, such a burst
Of irrepressible, overpowering joy,
Fill'd all the air, it seem'd as men were mad,
And dancing were supremest bliss of earth;—
The fairest dancer, first of woman-kind.
Then, as she curtsied with a winning look
To her idolaters, a shower of wreaths,
Garlands, and evergreens, and laurel crowns,
Fell all around her, and another burst
Of universal gladness rang around;
And she, descending from her platform, slid
Graceful into her chariot, and the crowd
Fill'd with new frenzy at her loveliness,
Unyoked her prancing jennets, dapple-grey,
And drew her forth triumphant to her home.

Still more amazed, I left this fearful crowd,
And wander'd out amid the quiet woods
To hold communion with my secret soul,
And note, in Memory's many-storied book,
What I had seen and heard—that pondering well
Its true significance, I might extract
Good from the ill, and from the darkness light.

THE KING AND THE NIGHTINGALES.

THE KING AND THE NIGHTINGALES.

A LEGEND OF HAVERING.

[Havering-atte-Bower, in Essex, was the favourite retirement of King Edward the Confessor, who so delighted in its solitary woods, that he shut himself up in them for weeks at a time. Old legends say that he met with but one annoyance in that pleasant seclusion—the continual warbling of the nightingales, pouring such floods of music upon his ear during his midnight meditations, as to disturb his devotions. He therefore prayed that never more within the bounds of that forest might nightingale's song be heard. His prayer, adds the legend, was granted. The following versification of the story shows a different result to his prayers—a result which, if it contradict tradition, does not, it is presumed, contradict poetical justice.]

King Edward dwelt at Havering-atte-Bower—
Old and enfeebled by the weight of power—
Sick of the troublous majesty of kings—
Weary of duty and all mortal things—
Weary of day—weary of night—forlorn—
Cursing, like Job, the hour that he was born.
Thick woods environ'd him, and in their shade
He roam'd all day, and told his beads, and pray'd.
Men's faces pain'd him, and he barr'd his door
That none might find him;—even the sunshine bore
No warmth or comfort to his wretched sight;
And darkness pleased no better than the light.

He scorn'd himself for eating food like men,
And lived on roots and water from the fen;
And aye he groan'd, and bow'd his hoary head—
Did penance, and put nettles in his bed—
Wore sackcloth on his loins, and smote his breast—
Told all his follies—all his sins confess'd—
Made accusations of himself to heaven,
And own'd to crimes too great to be forgiven,
Which he had thought, although he had not done—
Blackening his blackness; numbering one by one
Unheard of villanies without a name,
As if he gloried in inventing shame,
Or thought to win the grace of heaven by lies,
And gain a saintship in a fiend's disguise.

Long in these woods he dwelt—a wretched man,
Shut from all fellowship, self-placed in ban—
Laden with ceaseless prayer and boastful vows,
Which day and night he breathed beneath the boughs.
But sore distress'd he was, and wretched quite,
For every evening with the waning light
A choir of nightingales, the brakes among,
Deluged the woods with overflow of song.
"Unholy birds," he said, "your throats be riven!
You mar my prayers, you take my thoughts from heaven!"
But still the song, magnificent and loud,
Pour'd from the trees like rain from thunder-cloud;
Now to his vex'd and melancholy ear
Sounding like bridal music, pealing clear;
Anon it deepen'd on his throbbing brain
To full triumphal march or battle-strain;

Then seem'd to vary to a choral hymn,
Or *De Profundis* from cathedral dim,
"*Te Deum*," or "*Hosanna to the Lord*,"
Chanted by deep-voiced priests in full accord.
He shut his ears, he stamp'd upon the sod—
"Be ye accursed, ye take my thoughts from God!
And thou, belovèd saint to whom I bend,
Lamp of my life, my guardian, and my friend,
Make intercession for me, sweet St. John!
And hear the anguish of thy suffering son!
May nevermore within these woods be heard
The song of morning or of evening bird!
May nevermore their harmonies awake
Within the precincts of this lonely brake,
For I am weary, old, and full of woe,
And their songs vex me! This one boon bestow,
That I may pray, and give my thoughts to thee.
Without distraction of their melody;
And that within these bowers my groans and sighs
And ceaseless prayers be all the sound that rise.
Let God alone possess me, last and first;
And, for His sake, be all these birds accursed!"

This having said, he started where he stood,
And saw a stranger walking in the wood;
A purple glory, pale as amethyst,
Clad him all o'er. He knew th' Evangelist;
And, kneeling on the earth with reverence meet,
He kiss'd his garment's hem, and clasp'd his feet.
"Rise," said the saint, "and know, unhappy king,
That true Religion hates no living thing;

It loves the sunlight, loves the face of man,
And takes all virtuous pleasure that it can—
Shares in each harmless joy that Nature gives,
Bestows its sympathy on all that lives,
Sings with the bird, rejoices with the bee,
And, wise as manhood, sports with infancy.
Let not the nightingales disturb thy prayers,
But make thy thanksgiving as pure as theirs;
So shall it mount on wings of love to heaven,
And thou, forgiving, be thyself forgiven."

The calm voice ceased;—King Edward dared not look,
But bent to earth, and blush'd at the rebuke!
And though he closed his eyes and hid his face,
He knew the saint had vanish'd from the place.
And when he rose, ever the wild woods rang
With the sweet song the birds of evening sang.
No more he cursed them; loitering on his way
He listen'd, pleased, and bless'd them for their lay,
And on the morrow quitted Havering
To mix with men and be again a king,
And fasting, moaning, scorning, praying less,
Increased in virtue and in happiness.

EVERMORE—NEVERMORE.

"Wilt thou run to me for ever?"
Said the ocean to the river.
"Will ye ever fall on my hills and plains?"
Said the dry land to the rains.
"Will ye ever blossom while I sing?"
Said the lark to the flowers of spring.
"Will ye ever ripen while I shine?"
Said the sun to the corn and vine.
And ever the answer the breezes bore
Was, "*Evermore—for evermore.*"

"As long as all these things shall be,"
Said I, to Rosa kissing me,
"Shall Truth be sharper than a sword?
Shall kindness be its own reward?
Shall a free heart smoothe the roughest way?
Shall Hope shed light on the darkest day?
Shall tempests spare the reeds that bow,
And thou love me as thou lovest now?"
And ever the answer her sweet lips bore
Was, "*Evermore—for evermore.*"

"But shall I ever come back from thee?"
Said the river to the sea;
"Or I?" said the flower that Rosa threw
Into its waters bright and blue.

"Will ye bloom again on the summer eves?"
Said the tree to its wither'd leaves.
"Wilt thou fall again when the north winds blow?"
Said the grass to the melting snow.
And ever the answer the breezes bore
Was, "*Nevermore—oh, nevermore.*"

"If such the rule beneath the skies,"
Said Rosa, gazing in my eyes,
"Shall duty quit the debt we owe her,
Or blisses fail the bliss-bestower?
Shall a miser's heart be improved by his gold?
Shall the wealth of Love be ever told?
Or thou prove false to the tender vow
Thou swearest and repeatest now?"
And ever the answer my true lips bore
Was, "*Nevermore—oh nevermore.*"

THE TRUE COMPANION.

GIVE me the man, however old and staid,
  Or worn with sorrow and perplexity,
Who, when he walks in sunshine or in shade,
  By woodland bowers, or bare beach of the sea,
  O'er hill-top, or in valleys green, with me,
Throws off his age and gambols like a child,
And finds a boyish pleasure in the wild,
  Rejuvenescent on the flowery lea!
Him shall the year press lightly as he goes;
  The kindly wisdom gather'd in the fields
Shall be his antidote to worldly woes;
  And the o'erflowing joy that nature yields
To her true lovers shall his heart inclose,
  And blunt the shafts of care like iron shields.

WELCOME BACK.

SWEET songs of nightingale and lark
That greet the golden dawn,
Or twilight deepening into dark,
By mountain, grove, or lawn;
Long days, clear nights, and balmy winds,
Fresh flowers and forest leaves,
Birds, blossoms, fruit of ruddy rinds,
New hay, and barley sheaves;
All joys of nature, sounds or sights
Of forest, stream, or plain,
Ye're welcome, welcome, welcome ever,
And welcome back again.

Fair hopes, forgotten 'mid our toils,
Sweet visions dream'd of yore,
Calm thoughts effaced in life's turmoils,
Old songs we've sung before;
Forgotten comrades, friends estranged,
Acquaintance o'er the seas,
Old feelings weaken'd, lost, or changed,
And youthful memories;
Pure joys of home, kind words, sweet smiles,
And sympathy in pain,
Ye're welcome, welcome, welcome ever,
And welcome back again.

For Heaven is kind, and makes no stint
  Of blessings, though we die;
They pass in circles, and imprint
  Their footsteps as they fly.
'Tis ours to train them when begun,
  To keep the circle true,
And not neglect, forget, or shun
  The old ones for the new.
Ne'er to the hearts that prize them well
  They hold their course in vain:
They're welcome, welcome, welcome ever
  And welcome back again.

A LOVER'S FANCIES.

"*What sounds like pewter?*" said my Rose in play—
"The fall of earth upon a coffin-lid."
"*Like tin?*"—"The cock-crow heralding the day,
Or infant wailing that its mother chid."
"*Like steel?*"—"The quick sharp twitter on the spray
Of numerous sparrows in the foliage hid."
"*Like gold?*"—"The strong wind over forests borne,
Or full bass singer chanting prayer and creed."
"*Like brass?*"—"The neighing of a frighten'd steed,
Or roar of people clamouring for corn."
"*Like iron?*"—"Thunder-claps suddenly woken,
Startling the city in the summer night."
"*Like silver?*"—"Thy sweet voice that speaks delight,
And breathes Love's promise, never to be broken."

THE NINE BATHERS.

"I WOULD like to bathe in milk,"
Said little Agnes, fresh and fair,
With her taper fingers smooth as silk,
Her cherry cheeks and nut-brown hair—
"In a bath of ivory, fill'd to the brim,
I would love to lie and swim,
And float like a strawberry pluck'd at dawn,
In the lily-white waves of milk new-drawn."

"And I," said Rose, with her eyes divine,
"Would love to bathe in the ruddy wine,
Trailing my long and coal-black locks
In purple clarets and amber hocks;
And I would have a fountain play
So that the wine might fall in spray,
And I might stand in the sparkling rain,
Statue-like in perfect rest;—
And if the droplets left a stain,
I'd have a fountain of champagne
To wash the purple from my breast;
And troops of slaves, in rich attire,
Should scatter myrrh and incense sweet,
And bring me, should my looks desire,
A golden ewer to wash my feet.

I'd tread on carpets of velvet woof,
My mirrors should reach from floor to roof,
And every slave should envy me
My loveliness and luxury."

"And I," said Jane, with her eyes' dark glances
Radiant with untold romances,
"Would choose a milder bath than thine,
Nor crumple my curls with fiery wine.
In a bath of alabaster bright,
In a marble-floor'd and lofty hall,
Transplendent with the regal light
Of a thousand lamps from roof and wall,
Amid exotics rich and rare
Filling with odours all the air,
In clear rose-water I would lie,
Like a lily on a lake serene,
Or move my limbs to the harmony
Of an orchestra unseen,
Placed in a chamber far remote,
And floating sing, and singing float."

"Sweet bath!" said the calm fair Margaret;
"But the bath I'd choose is sweeter yet.
I'd have it in a rich saloon
Open to the breeze of noon,
With marble columns smooth and high,
And crimson damask drapery,
Fill'd with statues chaste and rare
Of nymphs and gods divinely fair.
Of jet-black marble the bath should be,
With no white speck on its purity;

It should not flow with milk or wine,
With scented waters or with brine;
It should be fill'd with meadow dew,
Gather'd at morning in the grass,
'Mid harebell-cups and violets blue,
And my bath should be my looking-glass;
And I would have a score of maids
Glowing with beauty, each and all,
To twist my locks in graceful braids,
And dress me for a festival."

"And I," said Lilias, raising her eyes
Clear as morn, of passion full,
"Would love to bathe under Eastern skies,
In the palace gardens of Istamboul,
In the hanging groves of Babylon,
Or Bagdad, city of the sun,
'Mid orange, date, and trailing vine,
Palm, and myrtle, and eglantine;
I would have fifty fountains fair,
'Mid bowers of roses and evergreens,
And bathing in the odorous air,
I would be waited on by queens."

"And I," said Ann, with her drooping tresses,
And eyes as full of love's caresses
As the morning is of day,
And mouth so ripe and kindly smiling
'Twas never made to answer "Nay,"
"I would bathe in the fresh blue sea
With the wild waves sporting over me;
I would toy with the harmless foam,

Passing my fingers like a comb
Through the crest of each wave that rear'd
Its spray, as white as Neptune's beard;—
With a fresh wind blowing across the reach,
I would dive and float again and again,
And dress myself on the bare sea-beach,
In a nook invisible to men."

"And I," said Laura, "would choose my bath
Where a river took its lonely path
On round smooth shingle, clear in its flow,
Showing the pebbles that slept below,
Through a flowery lawn well shaven and soft,
And cool to the feet. I would not care
For bands of music, if larks aloft
Fill'd with their songs the sunny air;
I would not ask for lustres bright,
If the clear morning shed its light;
Nor for marble statue of youth and maid,
If oaks and poplars lent their shade;
Nor for exotics of choice perfume,
If the Meadow-sweet were fresh in bloom;
I would but ask for a summer day,
And nearest eyes ten miles away."

"And I," said tuneful Isabel,
With her soft blue eyes and cheek vermeil,
With her witching smile and modest blush,
And voice to make the blackbird hush,
"I would not bathe by the sea-beach cold,
Nor river running through open wold;
I would not bathe in halls of state,

In wine, or milk, or honey-dew;
On me should no serving maidens wait,
Nor luxury my senses woo.
I would bathe far up in a Highland burn,
Hidden from sight in its every turn,
Deep embower'd 'mid pendent larch,
And silver birches poised on high,
With nothing alive to cross my path
But the bright incurious butterfly;
In a limpid basin of the rocks
I would unbind my flaxen locks,
And lay my clothes on the mossy stone,
Happy—happy—and all alone."

"And I," said Geraldine, smoothing back,
From her stately brow, her tresses black,
A blush, like morning over the isles,
Dawning upon her cheeks, and smiles
Flashing about her lips and eyes,
Full of meanings and mysteries,
"I would love to bathe in a quiet mere,
As a mirror smooth, as a dewdrop clear,
So still, that my floating limbs should make
The only ripples upon the lake;
I'd have it fringed with fruits and flowers,
Forests and orchards, groves and bowers,
That whenever I bathed in the noons of spring
I might pluck laburnums blossoming,
Or shake, as I floated, the lilac blooms,
Or chestnut-cones with their rich perfumes,
Over my glancing neck and shoulders,
Conceal'd in the leaves from all beholders,

I would choose a solitary nook
By the confluence of a brook,
Where the apples were ripe, and the jet-bla
cherries,
And the juicy luscious dark mulberries,
Or jargonelles of a ruddy gold,
And nectarines as sweet to taste
As the kisses of urchins three years old,
Grew within reach, that stretching in haste
My hand to the boughs as I floated near,
Or stood knee-deep in the lucid mere,
I might rustle and shake the pulpy treasure
Into the water for my pleasure,
Catching an apple as it fell,
Or diving for a jargonelle."

* * * * *

TWO MYSTERIES.

Two awful mysteries encompass me around,
And follow me for ever as I go;
I see, yet see them not,—I know they *are*,
And that they change more rapidly than thought,
Yet feel 'mid variability, that change,
While it affects them, leaves them still the same.
Sane, I enjoy them both—both are myself;
Insane, I fly them, but they haunt me still;—
Two mysteries and yet one—one infinite,
Two undistinguish'd points in space and time,
Ever effaced and ever permanent;—
Two little atoms so magnificent
That all the past conspired to give them birth,
And all the mighty future hangs on one;—
My Self, my Now,—God's Self, God's Now; so link'd
That not Eternity can disentwine
One from the other. Both to be employ'd
So that their circle evermore shall stretch
Till suns, and systems, and whole firmaments
Shall seem but points commensurate with them,
And aye to widen ever and evermore,
Nearing the throne where the Eternal sits,
Is joy, love, knowledge, happiness divine—
Oh that the secret of their use were mine!

THE CONFESSION OF AHASUERUS.

I WAS betray'd, and cruelly undone,
Smitten to anguish in my sorest part,
And so disgusted with all human life,
That curses came spontaneous to my lips;
I cursed the day—I cursed my fellow-men;
I cursed my God that made so bad a world.
Goaded to frenzy by excess of pain,
I tore my hair,—I dash'd my bleeding head
Against a wall; sobb'd, wept, and gnash'd my teeth.
I howl'd anathemas against myself
For being man, and living on the earth.
When suddenly a sweet and heavenly calm
Fell on my spirit; and a mild clear light
Diffused itself about me where I stood;
And I was conscious of a visible power
Unutterably great, divinely good;
And a voice spake, not angrily, but sad:
"Weak and unjust! thou hast blasphemed thy God;
God, whom thou knowest not. Thou hast malign'd
Thy fellow-men. Live, till thou knowest both!"
The awful glory stole away my sense,
Th' excess of splendour dazzled my dim eyes;
The clear words made me dumb; and for a while
Torpid and clod-like on the earth I lay,
Till th' ineffable brightness disappear'd.

And when I waken'd, life was misery;
Burden too mighty for my flesh to bear.
"Live till I know my God! That might I well;
But live in sorrow till I know mankind?
Heavy the curse! But if it must be borne,
Let me gain knowledge quickly, and so die!"
Long did I live. One hundred years of time
I held the faith that all my people held;
Observed their laws, and to a GOD of FEAR
Knelt down in awe and worshipp'd His derad name.
But still I lived, and cursed the weary days;
And had no love or reverence for my kind.
And still my pain grew with my discontent,
That I could not release myself and die.

Youth in my limbs, but age upon my heart,
I roam'd the earth. I dwelt among the Greeks;
I saw, well pleased, the majesty of life,
The power of beauty, and the sense of joy;
The physical grandeur of the earth and heaven;
But God himself was stranger to my thought;
I had a worship, but no inward faith;
I pray'd to gods of human lineament,
Emblems of natural forces and desires;
I fill'd the woods with visionary shapes;
Peopled the hills, the vales, the rocks, the streams,
The dark caves, and the sunny mountain-tops,
With forms of beauty; and conversed with them
Upon unseen, unreal phantasies,
Until they seem'd so palpable to sight,
So like to men in passion, vice, and crime,
I loathed, and shudder'd, and abhorr'd them all;

Nor knew in what abysm and hell of thought
To sink remembrance. And I lived—and lived,
Longer than hope; and still I could not die.

Then far away into the burning East
I bent my steps. And at one drowsy noon,
Under a palm-tree shade, beside a well,
Sat down, and groan'd in bitterness of grief
That God was still an alien to my soul.
I cast my limbs upon the feverish ground
And lay upon my face; and with my tears
Moisten'd the dust around me, praying still
That I might die; for I was sere of heart,
Old, miserably old, and most forlorn.
Thus lay I from the noon into the night,
And from the night into the sudden dawn,
And all that day I batten'd on my tears.
When, lo! there came a pilgrim by the way,
A pale, deject, and wiry-featured wretch,
With hands all sinewy, like a parrot's claws,
Thin lips, bright eyes, sunk cheeks, and grizzled hair.
There was a comfort in his hideousness,
As he sat down and gazed upon my grief,
And gave me pity, and contemptuous cheer.
"Brother," he said, "why what a fool art thou!
Neither in time, nor in eternity,
Neither in God, in nature, nor in man,
Is their aught worth the weeping of an hour.
'Tis good to run, but better far to walk;
'Tis good to walk, but better to sit still;
'Tis good to stand and wake, but better far
To lie and sleep, untroubled by a dream;

'Tis good to be when thought has been destroy'd,
Better, far better, never to have been.
The grass is happy; happier is the stone.
Highest of good is rest;—rest so sublime,
So deep, so thorough as to seem like death.
Be Rest thy god. Let the winds moan, not thou;
Let the skies weep, but shed not thou a tear;
And sleep and fast thy troublous life away
In one most happy and incessant calm,
Till sweet annihilation blots thee out.
This is Religion, this the only Faith;
Bliss is absorption—Heaven is nothingness."

He led me with his eye,—I follow'd him,
And I became a dull insensate lump,
And dozed in Buddha's temples night and day;
I bruised in mortar of my selfishness
All thoughts, all feeling, all desire, all vice,
All virtue, into one amorphous mass
Of apathy, and idiotcy, and sloth.
How long I wallow'd in this senseless sty
I never knew; I was but half alive,
And had no memory of time or change,
Only at intervals a grievous pain.

I was aroused at last, and scourged with whips,
Kick'd, beaten, spat on, cast into the mire.
Change had come o'er the places where I dwelt;
There was new law for men, new faith for God.
The conqueror's sword had pass'd upon the plain,
And what was spared did homage for its life.
God and his Prophet were the lords of earth;

And suddenly awaked, I found myself,
Even I, was living; that the world was mine;
Though I was old, most lamentably old,
But still condemn'd to mingle with my kind,
And choose my faith. I did as others did,
Learn'd the new law, and thought I served my God.
I served him not. Obedience blind, inept,
Unthinking, dull, insensate was the law:
Fate lorded over Will; Necessity
Turn'd men into machines. I cast my eyes,
Despairing still, upon the firmament,
Jewell'd with worlds, and reason'd with myself,
If Fate or Will upheld them in their place;
And in the infinite madness of my brain,
Conceived that each, majestic as it shone,
Was fill'd with misery and doubt like mine;—
A rolling hell set in the sky to preach
To other hells, as wretched as itself,
The dreadful power, the boundlessness of ill.
Long did I struggle with this deep despair,
And vehemently pray, both morn and night,
That I might be extinguish'd utterly;
That I might lay upon the arid soil
My lifeless bones, to feed the hungry roots
Of hemlock or mandragora with lime;
That I at least might end my doubts in death,
Though death were but the gate to other worlds
Of spiritual anguish more intense than this.

Another change came over me. Ere long
I wander'd forth o'er Asiatic plains;
Dwelt with the lizard in the crumbling halls

Of antique cities desolate, whose names
Were lost from memory. I shared the tent
Of roving spearmen and banditti fierce,
So utter old and sad, that murderous thieves
Took pity on my want and misery,
And spake me kindly, even when they loathed.
I lay beneath the palms at set of sun,
And wish'd that ravenous and night-prowling beasts
Would tear me limb from limb before the dawn.
I cross'd great deserts in the burning heat,
Forded strong rivers, pierced through trackless woods—
A thing so utter sad, that the lean wolves
Fled terror-smitten when they met my glance,
And hungry serpents hiss'd and slunk away.

How long the madness burn'd, 'twere vain to tell;—
Time and Eternity seem'd one to me.
But in a bright and lovely summer's morn
I felt my limbs supple and strong again,
As in my youth, ere grief and I were friends.
Far had I journey'd to an eastern clime,
'Mid an old people and an older faith.
I found some comfort, yet I could not die.
Still was Obedience law: childish and calm,
Not to a blind and cruel destiny,
But to the wise irrevocable rule
Of a just Deity, that made mankind,
And sent his clay-vicegerents to the earth,
To rule them justly, if they would submit
To walk for ever in the same dull track,—
To live and act, from barren age to age,

In the same fashion, with the same desires,
Same thoughts, same habits, and same prejudice;
More dull and senseless than a stagnant mire,
That even in its rottenness and sloth
Breeds something novel from its fruitful slime:—
But they bred nothing, only their dull selves;
And I despised them, hated them—and lived!
And knew by living I was still accursed,
And loved not God nor yet my fellow-men.

There was no resting here: my fiery soul
Felt mortal anguish to co-herd with theirs.
I went again a wanderer o'er the earth,
Taking no heed of time, or place, or change,
But weary, weary, abject and forlorn.

One year ago—'twas but one little year—
I enter'd, in my rags and squalidness,
A large fair city of the populous West:
The church-bells rang, the people were astir
In countless multitudes through all the streets;
Gay banners flaunted in the morning air,
And waves of music, from the Gothic porch
Of a cathedral, rush'd in floods divine,
Now in full tidal flow, and now in ebb,
So grand, so awe-inspiring, that even I,
Despised, abandon'd, abject, and abhorr'd,
Felt holy joy to listen to the sound,
Which soothed my spirit with melodious peace.

I listen'd long; for my sad heart was full.
I could have floated painlessly to death,

And bless'd the music with my latest sigh,—
But that a sudden plucking at the hem,
All mire-bedraggled, of my tatter'd robe,
Caused me to turn: I saw a fair young face,
Sweet even as hers who loved me in her youth—
She whom I now, for the first time, forgave
For wrongs inflicted on my trusting heart;
Like—but unlike; lovely—yet not so fair;
And at my miserable feet she knelt
To crave my blessing:—"Blessing! and from me!
From me, the vilest, meanest of mankind?"
"Ay, and from thee!" she said; "we know thee well,
Thou hast long suffer'd—thou'rt a saint of God."
And all the people, gathering round about,
Join'd in her supplication; kneeling down,
To crave my blessing—not in mockery,
But with deep reverence. Strange it seem'd, that I,
Who had not known for spanless gulfs of time
What blessing meant, should have the power to bless!

I could not bless her, for I felt my heart
Glow with dear memories forgotten long,
Brought back upon me by her mild sweet face.
The burden of my long-enduring pain
Was lighten'd by that pity, and I wept;
And every tear I shed became to me
Relief and joy, as, with an earnest voice,
I bless'd the people, showing them the while
My own unworthiness more great than theirs;
Unmeet my lips to utter words of peace,
Who long had cursed myself and all my kind.

And now the hoary portals opening wide,
Forth issued an array of robèd priests,
In white and scarlet; boys with censers flung
Rich incense in the air, while others hymn'd,
With sweet clear voice, "Hosanna to the Lord!"
And all the people knelt, and with them I.
The solemn music fill'd the pliant air,
And a religious sense was wafted round,—
Sense superadded, and unfelt before.
I could not rise; my cramp'd and weary joints
Seem'd bloodless as the stones on which I knelt;
And the procession and the people pass'd
In all their gorgeousness; and I was left
To my own strength, to follow if I list,
Or lie upon the pavement and expire.

I rose. I felt within my secret soul
More peace than had been mine since the great curse
Was spoken by the Presence for my sin.
But as I could not stay to be a saint,
And bear the flattery of the ignorant,
With a new courage I endued my heart,
And pray'd for strength, and went upon my way.

Here am I now. In thy serene abode,
I've gain'd new comfort from thy reverend lips,
And learn'd the secret of my destiny.
'Twas thou that taught me from the blessèd Book
That God is Love; and that those serve Him best
Who love their fellows, and obey the law,

Sublime but easy, preach'd by Him who died
To seal His doctrine by his guiltless blood.

I have not long to live. My race is run.
I would live longer, were it but to preach
To other souls as wretched as my own,
The mighty truth, that God is Love indeed;
But feel within me that mine hour is come.
I shall not see the morning dawn again;
My sin is pardon'd—I shall die in peace.

Bury me by myself—under a cross,
And put a fair white tombstone o'er my grave.
Place on it name, nor date, nor words, save these:
"He learn'd in suffering that God was Love,
And died in hope." Bear with me for a while;
I shall not die ere I have slept an hour.
Mine eyes are weary, let me close them now;
I shall awake to bless thee and depart.
Visions of glory throng upon my soul:
Brother, farewell, I'll see thee yet again,
Here and hereafter. Let me slumber now.

A REVERIE IN THE GRASS.

HERE let me rest, amid the bearded grass,
Sprinkled with buttercups; and idly pass
One hour of sunshine on the green hill-slope,
Watching the ridgèd clouds that o'er the cope
Of visible heaven sail quietly along;
Listening the wind, or rustling leaves, or song
Of blackbird or sweet ringdove in the copse
Of pines and sycamores, whose dark green tops
Form a clear outline right against the blue:—
Here let me lie and dream, losing from view
All vex'd and worldly things, and for one hour
Living such life as green leaf in a bower
Might live; breathing the calm, pure air,
Heedless of hope, or fear, or joy, or care.

Oh, it is pleasant in this summer time,
To sit alone and meditate or rhyme;
To hear the bee plying his busy trade,
Or grasshopper alert in sun and shade,
With bright large eyes and ample forehead bald,
Clad in cuirass and cushes emerald.
Here let me rest, and for a little space
Shut out the world from my abiding-place;
Seeing around me nought but grass and bent,
Nothing above me but the firmament;

For such my pleasure, that in solitude
Over my seething fancies I may brood,
Encrucibled and moulded as I list,
And I, expectant as an alchymist.

Oh, beautiful green grass! Earth-covering fair!
What shall be sung of thee, nor bright, nor rare,
Nor highly thought of? Long green grass that waves
By the wayside, over the ancient graves,
Or shoulders of the mountain looming high,
Or skulls of rocks, bald in their majesty,
Except for thee, that in the crevices
Liv'st on the nurture of the sun and breeze;
Adorner of the nude rude breast of hills,
Mantle of meadows, fringe of gushing rills,
Humblest of all the humble, thou shalt be,
If to none else, exalted unto me,
And for a time, a type of joy on Earth—
Joy unobtrusive, of perennial birth,
Common as light and air, and warmth and rain,
And all the daily blessings that in vain
Woo us to gratitude: the earliest born
Of all the juicy verdures that adorn
The fruitful bosom of the kindly soil;
Pleasant to eyes that ache, and limbs that toil.

Lo! as I muse, I see the bristling spears
Of thy seed-bearing stalks, which some, thy peers,
Lift o'er their fellows, nodding to and fro
Their lofty foreheads as the wild winds blow,
And think thy swarming multitudes a host,
Drawn up embattled on their native coast,

And officer'd for war:—the spearmen free
Raising their weapons, and the martial bee
Blowing his clarion, while some poppy tall
Displays the blood-red banner over all.

Pleased with the thought, I nurse it for a while,
And then dismiss it with a faint half-smile.
And next I fancy thee a multitude,
Moved by one breath, obedient to the mood
Of one strong thinker—the resistless wind,
That, passing o'er thee, bends thee to its mind.
See how thy blades, in myriads as they grow,
Turn ever eastward as the west winds blow—
Just as the human crowd is sway'd and bent,
By some great preacher, madly eloquent,
Who moves them at his will, and with a breath
Gives them their bias both in life and death.
Or by some wondrous actor, when he draws
All eyes and hearts, amid a hush'd applause,
Not to be utter'd, lest delight be marr'd;
Or, greater still, by hymn of prophet-bard,
Who moulds the lazy present by his rhyme,
And sings the glories of a future time.

And ye are happy, green leaves, every one,
Spread in your countless thousands to the sun!
Unlike mankind, no solitary blade
Of all your verdure ever disobey'd
The law of nature: every stalk that lifts
Its head above the mould, enjoys the gifts
Of liberal heaven—the rain, the dew, the light;
And points, though humbly, to the Infinite;

And every leaf, a populous world, maintains
Invisible nations on its wide-stretch'd plains.
So great is littleness! the mind at fault
Betwixt the peopled leaf and starry vault,
Doubts which is grandest, and, with holy awe,
Adores the God who made them, and whose law
Upholds them in Eternity or Time,
Greatest and least, ineffably sublime

LOVE OR WISDOM?

WERE I so mad as I have been of yore,
I would be happy: mad with beauty's eyes;
Mad with the voice of one I could adore,
And the sweet music of her soft replies:
Mad with the charms of a serene bright face;
Possess'd, and inly haunted, by the grace
Of some fair creature, in her form and mind
The star and paragon of all her kind.

For if I were so happy-mad again,
I'd live anew. I'd feed upon delights;
I'd find enraptured frenzy in a pain;
I'd roam, dreaming awake, through summer nights,
And hear a murmuring music in the air,
Which I would harmonize into a word—
That word her name. I'd kneel with forehead bare,
Out in the solemn woods, unseen, unheard,
And call on earth to bless her as she trod;
Sweet winds to fan her, skies to drop her joy;
And would invoke the providence of God
To keep her harmless, not let care annoy,
Nor sorrow vex, nor pleasure pall on sense;
My being hers, hers mine, and both intense

With a full, throbbing, rapturous, infinite bliss
In being loved. For madness such as this,
I'd give up wisdom and her castled clouds;
I would unlearn all I have learn'd; give back
Experience, and the blazoning breath of crowds
Wafting Fame's incense forward on my track.
I would forego all hope, and all desire
But one; that life might be a blank white page,
Where Fate might write *one* word of heavenly fire—
Love: that so breathing the delicious rage,
My veins might run it, and my brain might take
That for sole impulse, and for Love's sweet sake
Nature put on her bridal robes, and blush
Beauty upon me from each tree and flower;
And in her nightly gleam, her morning flush,
Her buzzing noon, and evening's golden hour,
Converse with me upon the one great theme
With all her voices; meadow, mountain, stream,
Forest, and ocean, uttering but one sound
Ever and ever as the world went round,
The stars repeating it, with meanings rife,
And that word LOVE:—this would be living life!

For why? And wert thou in that fiery craze
So happy, that thou wouldst indeed recall
What thou hast seen, done, suffer'd in the days
When thy blood boil'd, and thou wert passion all?
Poor fool! forgetful of departed woes,
Past misery, anguish, discontent, and tears;
Mindful alone of pleasure and repose,
Seen, through the wave of the refractive years,

In colours not their own. When LOVE was thine,
Wert thou not heart-sore? Didst thou not repine
For something that was past, or was to come?
Was not that day as wearisome as this?
Its music stale? Its friendly voices dumb,
And thou a dreamer of remoter bliss?
Poor fool! to-morrow thou wilt bless to-day,
And wish it back; and with a new disgust
Think of the newest time, till, fled away,
It leaves thee memory, and a fresh mistrust:
And so thou journeyest, thankless, to the dust.
Be not so mad as thou hast been of yore,
Yet happier far. Is not the NOW thine own?
Now ever present? *now* for evermore?
Now always with thee, but its worth unknown,
Or lightly thought of? Lay its mystery bare,
And learn the mighty secret how to live;—
Learn, that if mind be pure, the world is fair;
And that the outer sunshine cannot give
Such Warmth, and Joy, and Beauty, as the light
Cast by the inner spirit infinite,
When it is clear from every sensual stain.
Simple and thankful, live not thou in vain,
Nor hurry to the goal with desperate haste
To make the present past, and both a waste.

FOLLOW YOUR LEADER.

"*Follow your leader!*" So said HOPE,
In the joyous days when I was young;
O'er meadow path, up mountain-slope,
Through fragrant woods, I follow'd and sung;
And aye in the sunny air she smiled,
Bright as the cherub in Paphos born,
And aye my soul with a glance she wiled,
And tinged all earth with the hues of morn.
Long she led me o'er hill and hollow,
Through rivers wide, o'er mountains dun,
Till she soar'd at last too high to follow,
And scorch'd her pinions in the sun.

"*Follow your leader!*" So said LOVE,
Or a fairy sporting in his guise.
I follow'd, to lift the challenging glove
Of many a maid with tell-tale eyes.
I follow'd, and dream'd of young delights,
Of passionate kisses, joyous pains,
Of honey'd words in sleepless nights,
And amorous tear-drops thick as rains.
But ah! full soon the frenzy slacken'd;
There came a darkness and dimm'd the ray,
The passion cool'd, the sunshine blacken'd,
I lost the glory of my day.

"*Follow your leader!*" So said FAME,
In the calmer hours of my fruitful noon.
O'er briery paths, through frost, through flame,
By torrent, and swamp, and wild lagoon,
Ever she led me, and ever I went,
With bleeding feet and sun-brown skin,
Eager ever and uncontent,
As long as life had a prize to win.
But Dead-Sea apples alone she gave me,
To recompense me for my pain,
And still though her luring hand she gave me,
I may not follow her steps again.

"*Follow your leader!*" So said GOLD,
Ere the brown of my locks gave place to grey.
I could not follow—her looks were cold;
Icy and brittle was the way;
And GOLD spread forth her wiles in vain;
So taking POWER to aid her spell,
"*Follow your leaders!*" exclaim'd the twain,
"For where we go shall pleasure dwell."
I follow'd, and follow'd, till age came creeping,
And silver'd the hair on my aching head,
And *I* lamented, in vigils weeping,
A youth misspent, and a prime misled.

"*Follow your leader!*" I hear a voice,
Whispering to my soul this hour;—
"Who follows my light shall for ever rejoice,
Nor crave the perishing arm of POWER;

Who follows my steps shall for ever hold
A blessing purer than earthly love,
Brighter than FAME, richer than GOLD—
So follow my light and look above."
'Tis late to turn, but refuse I may not,
My trustful eyes are heavenwards cast,
And ever the sweet voice says, "*Delay not,*
I'm thy first leader and thy last."

'Tis the friend of my youth come back again,
Sober'd and chasten'd—but lovelier far
Than when in those days of sun and rain
She shone in my path as a guiding star.
She led me then, a wayward boy,
To things of Earth, and never of Heaven,
But now she whispers diviner joy,
Of errors blotted, of sins forgiven.
To a purpling sky she points her finger,
As westward wearily I plod,
And while I follow her steps, I linger,
Calm as herself, in the faith of God.

THE DEATH BANQUET OF THE GIRONDINS.

A FRAGMENT.

"The Girondins spent the last night of their captivity in the great dungeon—that Hall of Death. The tribunal had ordered that the still warm corpse of Valazé should be taken back to the prison, carried on the same cart with his accomplices to the place of execution, and buried with them. * * The gendarmes placed the body in a corner of the prison. The Girondins, one after the other, kissed the heroic hand of their friend. They covered his face with his mantle. 'To morrow!' said they to the corpse; and they gathered their strength for the coming day. It was near midnight. The deputy Bailleul, proscribed like them, but concealed in Paris, had promised to send them from without, on the day of their judgment, a last repast—of triumph or of death, according as they might be acquitted or condemned. By the help of a friend, he kept his word. The funeral supper was spread in the great dungeon. Costly viands, rare wines, flowers, and lights covered the oak table of the prison. * * The meal lasted till the dawn of day. Vergniaud, seated near the centre of the table, presided with the same calm dignity which he had preserved during the night of the 10th of August, while presiding over the Convention. The guests ate and drank with sobriety—merely to recruit their strength. Their discourse was grave and solemn, though not sad. Many of them spoke of the immortality of the soul and expressed their belief in a future state."—*Lamartine's History of the Girondins.*

"The last night of the Girondins was sublime. Vergniaud was provided with poison. He threw it away that he might die with his friends. They took a last meal together, at which they were by turns merry, serious, and eloquent. Brissot and

Gensonné were grave and pensive. Vergniaud spoke of expiring liberty in the noblest terms of regret, and of the destination of man with persuasive eloquence. Ducos repeated verses which he had composed in prison; and they all joined in singing hymns to France and Liberty."—*Thiers's History of the French Revolution.*

VERGNIAUD.

Never despair of goodness: men are bad,
But have been worse. The badness shall die out;
The goodness, like the thistle-down, shall float,
Bearing a germ beneath its tiny car—
A germ predestined to become a tree,
To fall on fruitful soil, and on its boughs
Bear seed enough to stock the universe.
Never despair of Freedom: though we die
In cruel martyrdom most undeserved,
What matters it, if Truth survive our bones?
No my dear brothers, we shall not despair,
Now or hereafter, for ourselves or men;
For we are sorrow-proof; our souls have borne
All the worst ills that can afflict the just.
We can sit down in strength of virtuous will,
And dare all malice and all power of men
To add one mental pang to bodily death,
Or rob us of the smallest privilege
That appertains to our humanity.
They may manure their gardens with our flesh,
And decompose our scaffolding of bones,
But cannot harm us, cannot touch the *I*,
The *Thou*, that dwells in clay receptacle,
Vast, awful, inaccessible, alone,
And *indestructible* as earth or heaven.

BRISSOT.

Would we could summon our poor Valazé
To visit us, and his forsaken corpse
Which bears us now such mournful company!
What secrets he could tell us if he might!
Perchance even now he listens to our words,
And shares our sorrows as he shared before.

SILLERY.

I do propose that in a solemn pledge
Over this wine we bear our love to him—
The soul of Valazé, if soul he have,
Outliving its poor garb of flesh and bone,
Or I, or thou, or any piece of dust
That walks on legs and calls itself a man;
Here's to his memory!—and if he live,
May he be happy in the light of heaven!

BRISSOT.

Dear Valazé! 'tis pleasant to my soul,
For soul *I* have, coeval with its God,
To think that he is with us at this hour;
Fill'd with the virtuous joy that shall be ours,
Soon as the bloody knife has done its work
In opening the door 'twixt earth and heaven,
And letting us go free.

LASOURCE.

Free of the earth perhaps, but free as gods?
To love, to know, to labour, to aspire?

They say that Heaven is full beatitude,
Bliss infinite and yet a bliss complete,
Sum of all hopes and crown of all desire.
I would not pass into a stagnant heaven,
For ever singing psalms and saying prayers.
Ah, no! the heaven that my spirit craves,
If place it be, and not a state of mind,
Is place for progress—infinite as God.
There is no good but effort. Paradise,
With nothing to be done, would be to me
Worse than the blackest Hell that Dante drew,
Or English Milton in his awful song.

DUCOS.

What work wouldst do? Wouldst like to strive in Heaven
With Robespierres or Dantons? or wouldst go
Down to the other place to battle there?

LASOURCE.

As for the other place, there is no Hell
But that which dwells in the ungodly soul—
A Hell eternal as the soul itself.
But for the virtuous and aspiring mind
There is no task more adequate to Heaven
Than war with Error. Light was only made
To change the alien Darkness to itself;
Love but to conquer and extinguish Hate.

CARRA.

I have two doubts; but to my tranquil mind
Each is a comfort. If perchance I go

Out of this body and remain myself,
I feel that God is good, and that this self
Shall not be damn'd, whatever bigots feign,
But shall enjoy the infinitude of love.
And if I go *not* hence—if I am *this*—
This bag of joints, and arteries, and flesh—
Nothing besides—and consciousness expires
When the lungs cease their functions, and the heart
Sends to the pulse the living stream no more,
There is nor disappointment, grief, nor pain,
In thought of nothingness. I've lived my life,
And can go down to Death without a pang,
And think annihilation bliss indeed.

DUCOS.

I not. I take an interest in things,
And would be glad to learn the fate of France,
For whose dear sake we die to-morrow morn;
And if the "incorruptible" corrupt
And bloody Robespierre shall 'scape the toils
He sets for us. I should be glad to know
How long the savage hounds that lap our blood
Shall offer up such holocausts to Hate,
As we shall be ere shines another sun.
Nor that alone;—I should rejoice to see
What great new poets shall arise with Time,
What famous plays and mighty play-actors
Shall draw the tears from lovely ladies' eyes,
Or dimple their sweet cheeks to heavenly smiles;
What new discoveries shall yet be made,
Greater than printing or than gunpowder;

And what shall be the fashion of men's beards
And young girls' petticoats a century hence;
How long the French Republic shall endure,
And whether any Cromwell shall arise
To turn our troubles to his own account;
Or, worst of all, whether the Capet race
Shall mount the throne again, to play the fool,
And drive humanity a century back;
And whether Catholic and Protestant
Shall hate each other in the days to come,
And do foul murder for the love of God,
As they have done since Luther was a priest.

FONFRÈDE.

And so should I; but not alone to know.
To see the miseries of this poor world,
Without the power to aid in their relief,
Would be indeed as bad as pitchy hell,
And worms that die not, and tormenting fiends.
No, no, Ducos; if we return at all,
We shall return refresh'd, and play a part.

VERGNIAUD.

Keep to thy thought, Fonfrède, and lose it not;
The soul, partaker of Divinity,
Must be partaker of Infinity—
Must know alike the secrets of all space,
And of this little grain of rolling sand
That we are born upon. Yes, we shall see,
Clear as a book, the riddle of the world;
We shall repeat the watchword of the stars;

We shall drink in divine enravishment,
As full upon us burst the harmonies
Of rolling planets, systems, firmaments.
The key-note of the music shall be plain,
And we shall strike it whenso'er we will,
And add to infinite Joy, Love infinite.

FAUCHET.

If we are worthy. Not to every soul
Such love and joy as thou depicturest.
Freed from its earthly shell, th' eternal mind
Must struggle *there*, as it has struggled here,
Upward, still upward, with incessant toil,
To make itself partaker of the bliss,
That in a widening circle God hath spread
Through His ineffable eternity.

SILLERY.

Is talking, struggling? For I trust, dear friend,
There will be talking in the other world,
And that we twenty-one now supping here,
Discoursing mistily of earth and heaven,
Shall have a nobler banquet in the sky,
And better talk in better company,
To-morrow night;—banquet of heavenly fruits,
Ambrosia, nectar, manna, wine of gods,
And converse with the mighty men of yore:—
Socrates, Plato, Buddha, Mahomet,
Homer, Anacreon, Euripides,
Ovid and Dante, Shakspeare and Corneille,
With Cæsar, Antony, and Constantine,

With Cleopatra, Hero, Helena,
Eve, and Semiramis, and Joan of Arc,
And a whole host of the undying dead—
Sages, philosophers, and ancient kings,
Bards, statesmen, actors, dancing girls, and wits,
And most beloved, our brother Valazé,
Gone as a herald to announce the doom
Of three times seven unconquerable souls,
Coming to join him ere the world goes round,
Or the next twilight deepens into day.

LASOURCE.

What ails our friend, our brother Vergniaud?
His gaze is fix'd upon vacuity—
He hears us not—he looks, but sees us not.
Kind sleep has thrown her mantle over him,
And in his slumber flow unbidden tears.

FONFRÈDE.

I could weep with him. Here we sit and talk
Of heaven and hell, unloosing knotty points,
Or grappling with them, but to make the coil
A worse entanglement—forgetting France,
And those who love us. I've not shed a tear,
But I could weep a flood, and in each drop
Pay tribute to my own humanity,
Which blushes for me, that I should forget,
In these last hours, my few, my faithful friends;
And she, the dear companion of my soul—
My love—my better life—that prays for me
In solitude and sorrow; or, perchance,

Watches outside these very walls, and weeps.
The tears are gathering in my eyes for her,
And they must flow, or make my heart a wreck.

VERGNIAUD.

Let the flood burst: tears are the wine of grief,
And will inspire thee more than sparkling Ai
Can stir the pulses of a bacchanal.
I crave no pardon for the tears I've shed,
The latest luxury that I shall taste.
In one short minute I have lived a life,
Felt all my joys, and suffer'd all my woes;
Loved all my loves, hoped all my hopes, despair'd
All the despairs that ever dull'd my sense;
Spoken my speeches, stirr'd a listening land
In name of freedom and the rights of men,
Ending this cosmorama of my days
By weeping on the breast of her I love
The tears you saw me shed—the tears whose flow
Refresh'd my heated brain, and bore me back
To consciousness of *now*, which I had lost.

GENSONNÉ.

Even so with me. I have been living lives
In minutes since our festival began.
Aye as the sands grows scanty in the glass
Of unrelenting Time, the falling grain
Exceeds in value all that went before,
And years of feeling load the back of each.

Five minutes past I was a little child—
I roam'd in meadows, gathering violets,
I bathed my tiny feet in running streams,
I strutted o'er the sward with martial drum,
I conn'd my painful lesson in the school,
I nestled in my little sister's breast,
And fell asleep, my arms entwining her.
And then I grew into a thoughtful boy,
Full of high projects and intense desires—
Passion and folly, wisdom and romance,
Ruling my soul by turns. Another grain
Dropp'd in the glass, and, lo! I was a man
Fill'd with ambition and desire of fame,
Raising my voice above the popular din,
To swell the rallying cry of ceaseless war
To royal tyranny and feudal wrong.
Another grain dropp'd through, and I was wed,
And lived long years of bridal happiness.
I built my house upon a hill; I plann'd
Gardens and orchards, parks and sloping lawns,
And fled from clash of modern politics
To ancient lore and calm philosophy.
Another grain, and all the visions fled.
I braved false judges in the judgment-seat,
Dishonouring judgment and the name of man;
Defied them to their teeth, and dared to die
And leave my fate a legacy to Time.
All this, and more, unwinding like a scroll,
Has pass'd before me at this feast of death,
Even as I talk'd, and drank, and laugh'd with you.
A double consciousness—an added self
Swathed me all o'er, as glory swathes a saint.

(*Sings.*)

THE CAP AND BELLS.

Did you ever trust a friend,
And when cheated trust him more?
Ever seek to gain your end,
Knocking at a rich man's door?
Do you trust your Doris fair,
When her tale of love she tells?
You deserve the cap you wear,
Jingle, jangle—shake your bells!

Think you that the men are wise
Who embark in public strife?
Or their judgment do you prize
Who for country risk their life?
Truth's existence could you swear?
Or affirm where honour dwells?
You deserve the cap you wear,
Jingle, jangle—shake your bells!

FONFRÈDE.

The voice is good—the singer, my good friend—
The manner perfect, but the song itself
A baseless libel. Try again, Ducos,
And give us something in a nobler mood.
We may not die with falsehood on our tongues,
And gibes and sneers curvetting on our lips.

DUCOS.

If like a swan, I must expire in song,
Hear my death anthem. Join it if you will.

THE GREY OWL.

The grey owl sat on the belfry-leads,
And look'd o'er the Seine to the place of heads,
Over the Seine to the Place de Grève.
The winds were sighing, the trees replying;
The moonlight stream'd o'er the abbey-nave,
Over the house-tops silently lying
White as the mist when the morn is new;
And aye the owl, so solemn of look,
The speckled grey of his plumage shook,
And screech'd in the turret—tu wheet, tu whoo!

Clear and full the moonlight swam
Around the towers of Notre Dame,
And tinged on the Grève the guillotine—
The winds were sighing, the trees replying—
When a cry was heard the gusts between,
A moan for the dead, and not for the dying,
Dolefully sounding the faubourgs through.
'Twas the howl of a dog for his master slain,
And the grey owl flapp'd his wings again,
And screech'd in the turret—tu wheet, tu whoo!

He flapp'd his wings and away he lurch'd
Over the Seine, and, resting, perch'd
On the high cross-beam of the guillotine-top.
The winds were sighing, the trees replying—
The tail of the howling hound did drop
As he saw, through the pallid moonlight flying,
The doleful bird loom into his view;

n true—
uchêsne,
his train."
wheet, to whoo!

r still
imb the hill,
angeful crowd"—
rees replying.
a bloody shroud.
ing,
the twenty-two;
he world to scare—
spierre!"
u wheet, tu whoo!

r.

he embodied soul
again?
s are safe,
Time his eyes can see
n's, I know.
l speaks the truth,
his truth a fear,
familiar thought.

DE.

upon the world.
s sport their waves,
ts to the light,
and Apennines

He ceased his moan and slunk away,
And the old owl rustled his pinions grey,
And screech'd from the scaffold—tu whee, tu whoo!

"Hurra!" quoth he, as the creature ran;
"What right have dogs to moan for man,
Or of love like this to make pretence?"
The winds were sighing, the trees replying.
"Such canine truth is a foul offence;
For if every fool on the guillotine dying,
Had a friend like this to howl and rue,
Their noise would drown the people's roar
When it tasted blood and clamour'd for more."
And the grey owl screech'd—tu whee, tu whoo!

"I wot that to-morrow's sun shall see
The death of a goodly company—
I trust no dogs will howl for them."
The winds were sighing, the trees replying.
"Two-and-twenty we condemn—
One has escaped from the shame of dying,
Open'd a door and glided through;
Yet two-and-twenty heads in all
Under the bloody knife shall fall."
And the grey owl screech'd—tu whee, tu whoo!

"Many shall follow them day by day,
The harvest-time shall not delay—
The headsman's harvest, so ripe, so red."
The winds were sighing, the trees replying—
"I know the name of each sentenced head—
Danton, the harsh and death-defying—

All his friends that think him true—
  Brutal and greedy Père Duchêsne,
  With all his comrades, all his train."
And the grey owl screech'd—tu wheet, to whoo!

"And after a while a greater still
Shall tread the road, shall climb the hill,
  Amid the shouts of the changeful crowd"—
The winds were sighing, the trees replying.
"And shall headless sleep in a bloody shroud.
Hated in life, accursed in dying,
He shall meet the doom of the twenty-two;
  And his name shall live the world to scare—
  'Tis Robespierre! 'tis Robespierre!"
And the grey owl screech'd—tu wheet, tu whoo!

SILLERY.

Who is your owl, Ducos?—the embodied soul
Of Marat visiting the earth again?
Whoe'er he be, his prophecies are safe,
And through the glooms of Time his eyes can see
About as clearly as some men's, I know.
Tis a brave bird, Ducos, and speaks the truth,
'Although his voice is harsh, his truth a fear,
And deeds of blood his too familiar thought.

LASOURCE.

Behold the dawn: it breaks upon the world.
How at this hour the oceans sport their waves,
And turn their frothy ringlets to the light,
And all the peaks of Alps and Apennines

Catch on their snowy heights the ruddy gold,
The silver, and the purple, and the grey,
And all the glory of its majesty.
The ancient forests shake their lordly boughs,
And pay obeisance to the rising morn;
The green fields smile, dew glistening, in its face;
The distant towns and villages awake,
The milk-maid sings, the cow-boy winds his horn,
And lowing cattle climb the sunward hills.
The twin grey towers of ancient Nôtre Dame
Are gilded with a smile, like hoary age
Relaxing to behold an infant's play.
Ay, even the gory guillotine receives
The splendour of the morning, and the slave
Drinks of the sunshine freely as the free.
What beauty compasses the teeming world!
What hideous spectacles ungrateful men
Throw in its face, to tire it of itself!
Beautiful morn! my blessing upon day!

SILLERY.

And mine—if worth acceptance. But behold,
The gaoler comes—our feast is at an end;
The death-bell tolls. Time fades to nothingness;
The hideous dream of life draws to its close;
The morning of Eternity is near.
Let us arise and wake like healthful men.

FAUCHET.

May God have mercy on us, and forgive
Our enemies, as we forgive them now.

VERGNIAUD.

Farewell, dear brothers—farewell, friends beloved.
The victims of a fearful tyranny
We die, but leave our names an heritage
That France shall wear, and boast of to the world.

THE END.

PRINTED BY COX AND WYMAN, GREAT QUEEN STREET, LONDON.

Voices from the Crowd, &c.

Voices from the Crowd.

THE WATCHER ON THE TOWER.

"WHAT dost thou see, lone watcher on the tower?
Is the day breaking? comes the wish'd-for hour?
Tell us the signs, and stretch abroad thy hand
If the bright morning dawns upon the land."

"The stars are clear above me, scarcely one
Has dimm'd its rays in reverence to the sun;
But yet I see, on the horizon's verge,
Some fair, faint streaks, as if the light would surge."

"Look forth again, O watcher on the tower—
The people wake, and languish for the hour;
Long have they dwelt in darkness, and they pine
For the full daylight which they know must shine."

"I see not well—the morn is cloudy still.—
There is a radiance on the distant hill;
Even as I watch the glory seems to grow;
But the stars blink, and the night breezes blow."

"And is that all, O watcher on the tower?
Look forth again; it must be near the hour.
Dost thou not see the snowy mountain-copes,
And the green woods beneath them on the slopes?"

"A mist envelopes them; I cannot trace
Their outline; but the day comes on apace.
The clouds roll up in gold and amber flakes,
And all the stars grow dim. The morning breaks."

"We thank thee, lonely watcher on the tower;
But look again; and tell us, hour by hour,
All thou beholdest. Many of us die
Ere the day comes; oh, give us a reply!"

"I see the hill-tops now; and Chanticleer
Crows his prophetic carol on mine ear;—
I see the distant woods and fields of corn,
And Ocean gleaming in the light of morn."

"Again—again—O watcher on the tower!
We thirst for daylight, and we bide the hour,
Patient, but longing. Tell us, shall it be
A bright, calm, glorious daylight for the free?"

"I hope, but cannot tell. I hear a song,
Vivid as day itself, and clear and strong,
As of a lark—young prophet of the noon—
Pouring in sunlight his seraphic tune."

"What doth he say, O watcher on the tower?
Is he a prophet? Doth the dawning hour

Inspire his music? *Is* his chant sublime,
Fill'd with the glories of the Future time?"

"He prophesies;—his heart is full;—his lay
Tells of the brightness of a peaceful day;
A day not cloudless, nor devoid of storm,
But sunny for the most, and clear and warm."

"We thank thee, watcher on the lonely tower,
For all thou tellest. Sings he of an hour
When Error shall decay, and Truth grow strong,
And Right shall rule supreme and vanquish Wrong?"

"He sings of brotherhood, and joy, and peace,
Of days when jealousies and hate shall cease:
When war shall die, and man's progressive mind
Soar as unfetter'd as its God design'd."

"Well done! thou watcher on the lonely tower!
Is the day breaking? dawns the happy hour?
We pine to see it:—tell us, yet again,
If the broad daylight breaks upon the plain?"

"It breaks—it comes—the misty shadows fly:—
A rosy radiance gleams upon the sky;
The mountain-tops reflect it calm and clear;
The plain is yet in shade, but day is near."

CLEAR THE WAY.

MEN of thought! be up, and stirring
Night and day:
Sow the seed—withdraw the curtain—
CLEAR THE WAY!
Men of action, aid and cheer them,
As ye may!
There's a fount about to stream,
There's a light about to beam,
There's a warmth about to glow,
There's a flower about to blow;
There's a midnight blackness changing
Into gray;
Men of thought and men of action,
CLEAR THE WAY!

Once the welcome light has broken,
Who shall say
What the unimagined glories
Of the day?
What the evil that shall perish
In its ray?
Aid the dawning, tongue and pen;
Aid it, hopes of honest men;
Aid it, paper—aid it, type—
Aid it, for the hour is ripe,

And our earnest must not slacken
Into play.
Men of thought and men of action,
CLEAR THE WAY!

Lo! a cloud's about to vanish
From the day;
And a brazen wrong to crumble
Into clay.
Lo! the right's about to conquer
CLEAR THE WAY!
With the Right shall many more
Enter smiling at the door;
With the giant Wrong shall fall
Many others, great and small,
That for ages long have held us
For their prey.
Men of thought and men of action,
CLEAR THE WAY!

THE GOOD TIME COMING.

THERE's a good time coming, boys,
A good time coming:
We may not live to see the day,
But earth shall glisten in the ray
Of the good time coming.
Cannon-balls may aid the truth,
But thought's a weapon stronger;
We'll win our battle by its aid;—
Wait a little longer.

There's a good time coming, boys,
A good time coming:
The pen shall supersede the sword,
And Right, not Might, shall be the lord
In the good time coming.
Worth, not Birth, shall rule mankind,
And be acknowledged stronger;
The proper impulse has been given;—
Wait a little longer.

There's a good time coming, boys,
A good time coming:
War in all men's eyes shall be
A monster of iniquity
In the good time coming.

Nations shall not quarrel then,
To prove which is the stronger;
Nor slaughter men for glory's sake;—
Wait a little longer.

There's a good time coming, boys,
A good time coming:
Hateful rivalries of creed
Shall not make their martyrs bleed
In the good time coming.
Religion shall be shorn of pride,
And flourish all the stronger;
And Charity shall trim her lamp;—
Wait a little longer.

There's a good time coming, boys,
A good time coming:
And a poor man's family
Shall not be his misery
In the good time coming.
Every child shall be a help,
To make his right arm stronger;
The happier he the more he has;—
Wait a little longer.

There's a good time coming, boys,
A good time coming:
Little children shall not toil,
Under, or above the soil,
In the good time coming;

But shall play in healthful fields
  Till limbs and mind grow stronger;
And every one shall read and write;—
  Wait a little longer.

There's a good time coming, boys,
  A good time coming:
The people shall be temperate,
And shall love instead of hate,
  In the good time coming.
They shall use, and not abuse,
  And make all virtue stronger.
The reformation has begun;—
  Wait a little longer.

There's a good time coming, boys,
  A good time coming:
Let us aid it all we can,
Every woman, every man,
  The good time coming.
Smallest helps, if rightly given,
  Make the impulse stronger;
'Twill be strong enough one day;—
  Wait a little longer.

THE WANTS OF THE PEOPLE.

1846.

WHAT do we want? Our daily bread;
  Leave to earn it by our skill;
Leave to labour freely for it,
  Leave to buy it where we will:
For 'tis hard upon the many—
  Hard, unpitied by the few,
To starve and die for want of work,
  Or live half-starved with work to do.

What do we want? Our daily bread;
  Fair reward for labour done;
Daily bread for wives and children;
  All our wants are merged in one.
When the fierce fiend Hunger grips us,
  Evil fancies clog our brains,
Vengeance settles on our hearts,
  And Frenzy gallops through our veins.

What do we want? Our daily bread;
  Give us that; all else will come—
Self-respect and self-denial,
  And the happiness of home;

Kindly feelings, education,
Liberty for act and thought;
And surety that, whate'er befall,
Our children shall be fed and taught.

What do we want? Our daily bread;
Give us *that* for willing toil:
Make us sharers in the plenty
God has shower'd upon the soil;
And we'll nurse our better natures
With bold hearts and judgment strong,
To do as much as men can do
To keep the world from going wrong.

What do we want? Our daily bread,
And trade untrammell'd as the wind;
And from our ranks shall spirits start,
To aid the progress of mankind.
Sages, poets, mechanicians,
Mighty thinkers, shall arise,
To take their share of loftier work,
And teach, exalt, and civilize.

What do we want? Our daily bread:—
Grant it:—make our efforts free;
Let us work and let us prosper;
You shall prosper more than we;
And the humblest homes of England
Shall, in proper time, give birth
To better men than we have been,
To live upon a better earth.

THE THREE PREACHERS.

THERE are three preachers, ever preaching,
  Fill'd with eloquence and power :—
One is old, with locks of white,
Skinny as an anchorite ;
  And he preaches every hour
With a shrill fanatic voice,
  And a bigot's fiery scorn :—
"BACKWARD ! ye presumptuous nations ;
  Man to misery is born !
Born to drudge, and sweat, and suffer—
  Born to labour and to pray ;
BACKWARD ! ye presumptuous nations—
  Back !—be humble and obey !"

The second is a milder preacher ;
  Soft he talks as if he sung ;
Sleek and slothful is his look,
And his words, as from a book,
  Issue glibly from his tongue.
With an air of self-content,
  High he lifts his fair white hands :
"STAND YE STILL ! ye restless nations ;
  And be happy, all ye lands !
Fate is law, and law is perfect ;
  If ye meddle, ye will mar ;
Change is rash, and ever was so :
  We are happy as we are."

Mightier is the younger preacher,
Genius flashes from his eyes;
And the crowds who hear his voice,
Give him, while their souls rejoice,
Throbbing bosoms for replies.
Awed they listen, yet elated,
While his stirring accents fall:—
"FORWARD! ye deluded nations,
Progress is the rule of all:
Man was made for healthful effort;
Tyranny has crush'd him long;
He shall march from good to better,
And do battle with the wrong.

"Standing still is childish folly,
Going backward is a crime:
None should patiently endure
Any ill that he can cure;
ONWARD! keep the march of Time.
Onward! while a wrong remains
To be conquer'd by the right;
While Oppression lifts a finger
To affront us by his might;
While an error clouds the reason
Of the universal heart,
Or a slave awaits his freedom,
Action is the wise man's part.

"Lo! the world is rich in blessings:
Earth and Ocean, flame and wind,
Have unnumber'd secrets still,
To be ransack'd when you will,
For the service of mankind;

Science is a child as yet,
  And her power and scope shall grow,
And her triumphs in the future
  Shall diminish toil and woe;
Shall extend the bounds of pleasure
  With an ever-widening ken,
And of woods and wildernesses
  Make the homes of happy men.

"ONWARD!—there are ills to conquer,
  Daily wickedness is wrought,
Tyranny is swoln with Pride,
Bigotry is deified,
  Error intertwined with Thought.
Vice and Misery ramp and crawl;—
  Root them out, their day has pass'd;
Goodness is alone immortal;
  Evil was not made to last:
ONWARD! and all Earth shall aid us
  Ere our peaceful flag be furl'd."—
And the preaching of this preacher
  Stirs the pulses of the world.

OLD OPINIONS.

Once we thought that Power Eternal
Had decreed the woes of man;
That the human heart was wicked
Since its pulses first began;
That the earth was but a prison,
Dark and joyless at the best,
And that men were born for evil,
And imbibed it from the breast;
That 'twas vain to think of urging
Any earthly progress on.
Old opinions! rags and tatters!
Get you gone! get you gone!

Once we thought all human sorrows
Were predestined to endure;
That, as man had never made them,
Men were impotent to cure;
That the few were borne superior,
Though the many might rebel;—
Those to sit at Nature's table,
These to pick the crumbs that fell;
Those to live upon the fatness,
These the starvelings, lank and wan.
Old opinions! rags and tatters!
Get you gone! get you gone!

Once we thought that holy Freedom
Was a cursed and tainted thing;
Foe of Peace, and Law, and Virtue;
Foe of Magistrate and King;
That all vile degraded passion
Ever follow'd in her path;
Lust and Plunder, War and Rapine,
Tears, and Anarchy, and Wrath;
That the angel was a cruel,
Haughty, blood-stain'd Amazon.
Old opinions! rags and tatters!
Get you gone! get you gone!

Once we thought it right to foster
Local jealousies and pride;
Right to hate another nation
Parted from us by a tide;
Right to go to war for glory,
Or extension of domain;
Right, through fear of foreign rivals,
To refuse the needful grain;
Right to bar it out till Famine
Drew the bolt with fingers wan.
Old opinions! rags and tatters!
Get you gone! get you gone!

Once we thought that Education
Was a luxury for the few;
That to give it to the many
Was to give it scope undue:

That 'twas foolish to imagine
It could be as free as air,
Common as the glorious sunshine
To the child of want and care:
That the poor man, educated,
Quarrell'd with his toil anon.
Old opinions! rags and tatters!
Get you gone! get you gone!

Old opinions, rags and tatters;
Ye are worn;—ah, quite threadbare!
We must cast you off for ever;—
We are wiser than we were:
Never fitting, always cramping,
Letting in the wind and sleet,
Chilling us with rheums and agues,
Or inflaming us with heat.
We have found a mental raiment
Purer, whiter, to put on.
Old opinions! rags and tatters!
Get you gone! get you gone!

DAILY WORK.

1846.

WHO lags for dread of daily work,
And his appointed task would shirk,
  Commits a folly and a crime;
    A soulless slave—a paltry knave—
  A clog upon the wheels of Time.
With work to do, and store of health,
  The man's unworthy to be free,
    Who will not give, that he may live,
  His daily toil for daily fee.

No! Let us work! We only ask
Reward proportion'd to our task:—
  We have no quarrel with the great;
    No feud with rank—with mill or bank—
  No envy of a lord's estate.
If we can earn sufficient store
  To satisfy our daily need;
    And can retain, for age and pain,
  A fraction, we are rich indeed.

No dread of toil have we or ours;
We know our worth, and weigh our powers;
  The more we work the more we win:
    Success to Trade! Success to Spade!
  And to the corn that's coming in!

And joy to him, who o'er his task
Remembers toil is Nature's plan ;
Who, working, thinks—and never sinks
His independence as a man.

Who only asks for humblest wealth,
Enough for competence and health ;
And leisure, when his work is done,
To read his book by chimney-nook,
Or stroll at setting of the sun :
Who toils, as every man should toil,
For fair reward, erect and free.
These are the men—the best of men—
These are the men we mean to be !

AN EMIGRANT'S BLESSING.

FAREWELL, England! blessings on thee,
  Stern and niggard as thou art;
Harshly, Mother, thou hast used me,
And my bread thou hast refused me;
  But 'tis agony to part.
'Twill pass over; for I would not
  Bear again what I could tell—
Half the ills that I have suffer'd—
  Though I loved thee twice as well.
So—my blessings on thee, England,
  And a long and last farewell!

Other regions will provide me
  Independence for my age,
Recompense for hard exertion—
For my children, the reversion
  Of a goodly heritage.
England—*this* thou couldst not give me;
  England, pamperer of squires,
Landlord-ridden, pride-encumber'd,
  Quencher of the poor man's fires;—
But, farewell! My blessing on thee;
  Thou art country of my sires.

Though I love, I'm glad to fly thee;
  Who would live in hopeless toil,
Evil-steep'd and ill-exampled,
Press'd and jostled, crush'd and trampled,
  Interloper on the soil—

If there were *one* other country
Where an honest man might go,
Winning corn-fields from the forest—
All his own, too—blow by blow?
Farewell, England—I regret thee,
But my tears refuse to flow.

Haply o'er the Southern ocean
I shall do my part, to rear
A new nation, Saxon-blooded,
Which, with plenty crown'd and studded,
To its happy children dear,
Shall eclipse thy fame, O England;
Taught and warn'd alike by thee;—
Mightier with unshackled commerce,
Mightier in her men more free,
Mightier in her virgin vigour,
And her just equality.

But farewell. My blessing on thee!
Never, till my latest day,
Shall my memory cease to ponder
On thy fate, where'er I wander;—
Never shall I cease to pray
That the many may be happy;
That the few their pride may quell;
That thou mayst in peaceful progress
All thy misery dispel;—
Queen of nations: once their model—
God be with thee! Fare-thee-well!

RAILWAYS.

"No poetry in Railways!" foolish thought
Of a dull brain, to no fine music wrought.
By mammon dazzled, though the people prize
The gold alone, yet shall not we despise
The triumphs of our time, or fail to see
Of pregnant mind the fruitful progeny
Ushering the daylight of the world's new morn.
Look up, ye doubters, be no more forlorn!—
Smooth your rough brows, ye little wise: rejoice,
Ye who despond: and with exulting voice
Salute, ye earnest spirits of our time,
The young Improvement ripening to her prime,
Who, in the fulness of her genial youth,
Prepares the way for Liberty and Truth,
And breaks the barriers that, since earth began,
Have made mankind the enemy of man.

Lay down your rails, ye nations, near and far—
Yoke your full trains to Steam's triumphal car;
Link town to town; unite in iron bands
The long-estranged and oft-embattled lands.
Peace, mild-eyed seraph—Knowledge, light divine,
Shall send their messengers by every line.
Men, join'd in amity, shall wonder long
That Hate had power to lead their fathers wrong;
Or that false Glory lured their hearts astray,
And made it virtuous and sublime to slay.

Blessings on science! When the earth seem'd old,
When Faith grew doting, and the Reason cold,
'Twas she discover'd that the world was young,
And taught a language to its lisping tongue:
'Twas she disclosed a future to its view,
And made old knowledge pale before the new.

Blessings on Science! In her dawning hour
Faith knit her brow, alarm'd for ancient power;
Then look'd again upon her face sincere,
Held out her hand, and hail'd her—Sister dear;
And Reason, free as eagle on the wind,
Swoop'd o'er the fallow meadows of the mind,
And, clear of vision, saw what seed would grow
On the hill-slopes, or in the vales below;
What in the sunny South, or nipping Nord,
And from her talons dropp'd it as she soar'd.

Blessings on Science, and her handmaid Steam!
They make Utopia only half a dream;
And show the fervent, of capacious souls,
Who watch the ball of Progress as it rolls,
That all as yet completed, or begun,
Is but the dawning that precedes the sun.

THE FERMENTATION.

LONELY sitting, deeply musing,
On a still and starry night,
Full of fancies, when my glances
Turn'd upon those far romances
Scatter'd o'er the Infinite;
On a sudden, broke upon me
Murmurs, rumours, quick and loud,
And, half-waking, I discover'd
An innumerable crowd.

'Mid the uproar of their voices
Scarcely could I hear a word;
There was rushing, there was crushing,
And a sound like music gushing,
And a roar like forests stirr'd
By a fierce wind passing o'er them:—
And a voice came now and then,
Louder than them all, exclaiming,
"Give us Justice! we are men!"

And the longer that I listen'd,
More distinctly could I hear,
'Mid the poising of the voicing,
Sounds of sorrow and rejoicing,
Utterance of Hope and Fear;

And a clash of disputation,
  And of words at random cast—
Truths and Errors intermingling,
  Of the present and the past.

Some where shouting that Oppression
  Held their consciences in thrall;
Some were crying, "Men are dying,
Hunger-smit, and none supplying
  Bread, the birthright of us all."
Some exclaim'd that Wealth was haughty,
  Harsh, and callous to the poor;—
Others cried, the poor were vicious,
  Idle, thankless, insecure.

Some, with voice of indignation,
  Told the story of their wrongs,
Full of dolour—life-controller—
That for difference of colour
  They were sold like cattle-throngs.
Others, pallid, weak, and shivering,
  Said that laws were surely bad,
When the willing hand was idle,
  And the cheeks of Toil were sad.

"Give us freedom for the conscience!"
  "Equal rights!"—"Unfetter'd Mind!"
"Education!"—"Compensation!"
"Justice for a mighty nation!"
  "Progress!"—"Peace with all mankind!"

"Let us labour!"—"Give us churches!"
"Give us Corn where'er it grow!"
These, and other cries, around me
Surged incessant, loud or low.

Old opinions jarr'd with new ones;
New ones jostled with the old;
In such Babel, few were able
To distinguish truth from fable,
In the tale their neighbours told.
But one voice above all others
Sounded like the voice of ten,
Clear, sonorous, and persuasive:—
"Give us Justice! we are men!"

And I said, "Oh Sovereign Reason,
Sire of Peace and Liberty!
Aid for ever their endeavour:—
Boldly let them still assever
All the rights they claim in thee.
Aid the mighty Fermentation
Till it purifies at last,
And the Future of the people
Is made brighter than the Past."

THE POOR MAN'S SUNDAY WALK.

THE morning of our rest has come,
The sun is shining clear;
I see it on the steeple-top;
Put on your shawl, my dear,
And let us leave the smoky town,
The dense and stagnant lane,
And take our children by the hand
To see the fields again.
I've pined for air the live-long week;
For the smell of new-mown hay;
For a pleasant, quiet, country walk,
On a sunny Sabbath-day.

Our parish church is cold and damp;
I need the air and sun;
We'll sit together on the grass,
And see the children run.
We'll watch them gathering buttercups,
Or cowslips in the dell,
Or listen to the cheerful sounds
Of the far-off village bell;
And thank our God with grateful hearts,
Though in the fields we pray;
And bless the healthful breeze of heaven,
On a sunny Sabbath-day.

I'm weary of the stifling room
  Where all the week we're pent,—
Of the alley fill'd with wretched life,
  And odours pestilent;
And long once more to see the fields,
  And the grazing sheep and beeves;
To hear the lark amid the clouds,
  And the wind among the leaves;
And all the sounds that glad the air
  On green hills far away—
The sounds that breathe of Peace and Love,
  On a sunny Sabbath-day.

For somehow, though they call it wrong,
  In church I cannot kneel
With half the natural thankfulness
  And piety I feel,
When out, on such a day as this,
  I lie upon the sod,
And think that every leaf and flower
  Is grateful to its God:
That I, who feel the blessing more,
  Should thank Him more than they
That I can elevate my soul
  On a sunny Sabbath-day.

Put on your shawl, and let us go;—
  For one day let us think
Of something else than daily care,
  Of toil, and meat, and drink:

For one day let the children sport
And feel their limbs their own;
For one day let us quite forget
The grief that we have known:—
Let us forget that we are poor;
And, basking in the ray,
Thank God that we can still enjoy
A sunny Sabbath-day.

A WELCOME TO LOUIS PHILIPPE.

MARCH, 1848.

WE do not cheer thee, faithless king,
  Nor shout before thee now;
We have no reverence for a thing
  So false of heart as thou:
We form no crowds to welcome thee,
  And yet we cannot hate—
Though parricide of liberty—
  An old man desolate.

When, in such sudden dark eclipse,
  We see thine overthrow;
The hisses die upon our lips,
  We turn and let thee go.
Poor, weak, denuded royalty,
  So abject, so forlorn,
The greatness of thy misery
  Shall shield thee from our scorn.

We saw thee yesterday elate
  In majesty and pride,
Thy flowing wealth, thy gorgeous state,
  Thy power half deified.
Based on the faults of humankind
  We saw thy meshes lurk,
And constant Fortune's favouring wind
  Still waft thee tools to work.

We saw thee building, building up
  Thy pomps before our eyes,
And ever in thy flowing cup
  The sparkling bubbles rise:—
Alliance, worship, all were thine,
  And, spectacle unmeet,
Ev'n genius, drunk with bribery's wine,
  Lay grovelling at thy feet.

When earnest men affirm'd the right,
  And ask'd the judging Heaven,
If ever, since the birth of light,
  Had fraud and falsehood thriven,
Our fingers pointed with mistrust
  To thee as our reply—
A living mockery of the just,
  That gave their truth the lie.

All this thou wert but yestermorn—
  Thy fall is freedom's birth;
To-day thou art a mark for scorn,
  A vagrant on the earth.
A truth pervading all the lands
  Inspired the people's heart,
It throbb'd—it beat—it nerved their hands—
  It made thee what thou art.

Lo, like a coward, self-accused,
  We saw thee skulk and fly,
And hug a life that none refused,
  For want of strength to die.

To 'scape th' imaginary chase
That made thy soul afraid,
We saw thy shifts, thy shaven face,
Thy piteous masquerade.

We blush'd, we groan'd, to see thee seek
Mean safety in disguise,
And, like a knavish bankrupt, sneak
From sight of honest eyes.
Forlorn old man! our hate expires
At spectacle like this;—
Our pity kindles all its fires—
We have not heart to hiss.

Live on—thou hast not lived in vain!
A mighty truth uprears
Its radiant forehead o'er thy reign,
And lights the coming years:
Though specious Tyranny be strong
Humanity is true,
And Empire based upon a wrong
Is rotten through and through.

Though falsehoods into system wrought,
Condensed into a plan,
May stand awhile, their power is nought—
There is a God in man.
His revolutions speak in ours,
And make His justice plain—
Old man forlorn, live out thine hours,
Thou hast not lived in vain.

THE DREAM OF THE REVELLER.

AROUND the board the guests were met, the lights above them beaming,
And in their cups, replenish'd oft, the ruddy wine was streaming;
Their cheeks were flush'd, their eyes were bright, their hearts with pleasure bounded,
The song was sung, the toast was given, and loud the revel sounded.
I drain'd a goblet with the rest, and cried, "Away with sorrow!
Let us be happy for to-day; what care we for to-morrow?"
But as I spoke, my sight grew dim, and slumber deep came o'er me,
And, 'mid the whirl of mingling tongues, this vision pass'd before me.

Methought I saw a demon rise: he held a mighty bicker,
Whose burnish'd sides ran brimming o'er with floods of burning liquor,
Around him press'd a clamorous crowd, to taste this liquour, greedy,
But chiefly came the poor and sad, the suffering and the needy;

All those oppress'd by grief or debt, the dissolute, the lazy,
Blear-eyed old men and reckless youths, and palsied women crazy;
"Give, give!" they cried, "Give, give us drink, to drown all thought of sorrow;
If we are happy for to-day, what care we for to-morrow?"

The *first* drop warm'd their shivering skins, and drove away their sadness;
The *second* lit their sunken eyes, and fill'd their souls with gladness;
The *third* drop made them shout and roar, and play each furious antic;
The *fourth* drop boil'd their very blood; and the *fifth* drop drove them frantic.—
"Drink!" said the Demon, "Drink your fill! drink of these waters mellow;—
They'll make your eye-balls sear and dull, and turn your white skins yellow;
They'll fill your homes with care and grief, and clothe your backs with tatters;
They'll fill your hearts with evil thoughts; but never mind!—what matters?

"Though virtue sink, and reason fail, and social ties dissever,
I'll be your friend in hour of need, and find you homes for ever;

For I have built three mansions high, three strong
and goodly houses,
To lodge at last each jolly soul who all his life
carouses.—
The *first*, it is a spacious house, to all but sots
appalling,
Where, by the parish bounty fed, vile, in the sun-
shine crawling,
The worn-out drunkard ends his days, and eats the
dole of others,
A plague and burthen to himself, an eyesore to his
brothers.

"The *second* is a lazarhouse, rank, fetid, and unholy;
Where, smitten by diseases foul and hopeless melan-
choly,
The victims of potations deep pine on the couch of
sadness,
Some calling Death to end their pain, and some
imploring Madness.
The *third* and last is black and high, the abode of
guilt and anguish,
And full of dungeons deep and fast, where death-
doom'd felons languish;
So drain the cup, and drain again! One of my
goodly houses
Shall lodge at last each jolly soul who to the dregs
carouses!"

But well he knew—that Demon old—how vain was
all his preaching,
The ragged crew that round him flock'd were heed-
less of his teaching;

Even as they heard his fearful words, they cried,
with shouts of laughter,—
"Out on the fool who mars to-day with thoughts of
an hereafter!
We care not for thy houses three; we live but for
the present;
And merry will we make it yet, and quaff our
bumpers pleasant."
Loud laugh'd the fiend to hear them speak, and,
lifting high his bicker,
"Body and soul are mine!" said he; "I'll have them
both for liquor."

THE POET AND THE POLITICAL ECONOMIST.

THE POLITICAL ECONOMIST.

PRITHEE, Poet, why this spinning,
  Spinning verses all the day?
Vain and idle thy vocation,—
Thy art useless to the nation,
  In thy labour and thy play.

Little doth the world esteem thee,
  And it takes thee at thy worth;
Loftiest rhyme that e'er was fashion'd,
Sounding, gorgeous, or impassion'd,
  Is a drug upon the earth.

Go—and be a cotton-spinner;
  Put thy hand upon the spade;
Weave a basket out of willow;
Dig the mine, or sail the billow—
  Anything but such a trade.

THE POET.

Why thy scorn, O man of logic?
  Speak of that within thy ken:
I despise thee not;—thy labours,
If they make us better neighbours,
  Are not valueless to men.

Highly all the world esteems thee,
And a poet may declare,
That the wise should place reliance
On the efforts of thy science
To diminish human care.

Bring thy hidden truths to daylight,
And I'll ne'er complain of thee.
Dull thou'rt call'd—and dulness cumbers;
Yet there's wisdom in *thy* numbers;
Leave *my* numbers unto me.

Each of us fulfils a duty,
And, though scorn'd, I'll cling to mine,
With a passion ever growing,
In my heart, to overflowing;—
Cling thou with as much to thine.

Thou'rt a preacher; *I'm* a prophet.
Thou discoursest to thy time;
I discourse to generations,
And the thoughts of unborn nations
Shall be fashion'd by my rhyme.

Thou, to dubious politicians,
Staid and passionless and slow,
Givest *pros* and *cons* with candour,
Bland and patient, ever blander
As thy trim deductions flow.

I send forth electric flashes
To the bosom of the crowd ;
Rule its pulses, cheer its sadness,
Make it throb and pant with gladness,
Till it answers me aloud.

Not for me to linger idly,
Gathering garlands by the way ;
Singing but of flowers and sunsets,
Lovers' vows, or nightly onsets,
Or of ladies fair as May.

No ; the poet loves his calling ;
Nature's lyre is all his own ;
He can sweep its strings prophetic,
Till the nations, sympathetic,
Gather breathless to its tone.

For he knows the PEOPLE listen
When a mighty spirit speaks,
And that none can stir them duly
But the man who loves them truly,
And from *them* his impulse seeks.

What they feel, but cannot utter ;
What they hope for, day and night ;—
These the words by which he fires them,
Prompts them, leads them, and inspires them
To do battle for the right.

These the words by which the many
Cope for justice with the few;—
These their watchwords, when Oppression,
Would resist the small concession,
But a fraction of their due.

These the poet, music-hearted,
Blazons to the listening land,
And for these all lands shall prize him,
Though the foolish may despise him,
Or the wise misunderstand.

Go thy way, then, man of logic,
In thy fashion, speak thy truth;—
Thou hast fix'd, and I have chosen;—
Thou shalt speak to blood that's frozen,
I to vigour and to youth.

Haply we shall both be useful,
And, perchance, more useful thou,
If their full degree of merit
To all other moods of spirit
Thou wilt cheerfully allow.

As for me, I fear no scorning,
And shall speak with earnest mind
What is in me;—self-rewarded
If I aid, though unregarded,
The advancement of my kind.

TO A FRIEND AFRAID OF CRITICS.

Afraid of critics! an unworthy fear:
Great minds must learn their greatness and be bold.
Walk on thy way; bring forth thine own true
thought;
Love thy high calling only for itself,
And find in working recompense for work,
And Envy's shaft shall whizz at thee in vain.
Despise not censure;—weigh if it be just;
And if it be—amend, whate'er the thought
Of him who cast it. Take the wise man's praise,
And love thyself the more that thou couldst earn
Meed so exalted; but the blame of fools,
Let it blow over like an idle whiff
Of poisonous tobacco in the streets,
Invasive of thy unoffending nose:—
Their praise no better, only more perfumed.

The Critics—let me paint them as they are.
Some few I know, and love them from my soul;
Polish'd, acute, deep read; of inborn taste
Cultured into a virtue; full of pith
And kindly vigour, having won their spurs
In the great rivalry of friendly mind,
And generous to others, though unknown,
Who would, having a thought, let all men know
The new discovery. But these are rare;

And if thou find one, take him to thy heart,
And think his unbought praise both palm and crown,
A thing worth living for, were nought beside.
Fear thou no critic, if thou 'rt true thyself;—
And look for fame *now* if the wise approve,
Or from a wiser jury yet unborn.
The Poetaster may be harm'd enough,
But Criticasters cannot crush a Bard.

If to be famous be thy sole intent,
And greatness be a mark beyond thy reach,
Manage the critics, and thou 'lt win the game;
Invite them to thy board, and give them feasts,
And foster them with unrelaxing care;
And they will praise thee in their partial sheets,
And quite ignore the worth of better men.
But if thou wilt not court them, let them go,
And scorn the praise that sells itself for wine,
Or tacks itself upon success alone,
Hanging like spittle on a rich man's beard.

One, if thou 'rt great, will cite from thy new book
The tamest passage,—something that thy soul
Revolts at, now the inspiration 's o'er,
And would give all thou hast to blot from print
And sink into oblivion;—and will vaunt
The thing as beautiful, transcendent, rare—
The best thing thou hast done! Another friend,
With finer sense, will praise thy greatest thought,
Yet cavil at it; putting in his "*buts*"
And "*yets*," and little obvious hints,
That though 'tis good, the critic could have made

A work superior in its every part.
Another, in a pert and savage mood,
Without a reason, will condemn thee quite,
And strive to quench thee in a paragraph.
Another, with dishonest waggery,
Will twist, misquote, and utterly pervert
Thy thoughts and words; and hug himself meanwhi
In the delusion, pleasant to his soul,
That thou art crush'd, and he a gentleman.

Another, with a specious fair pretence,
Immaculately wise, will skim thy book,
And self-sufficient, from his desk look down
With undisguised contempt on thee and thine;
And sneer and snarl thee, from his weekly court
From an idea, spawn of his conceit,
That the best means to gain a great renown
For wisdom is to sneer at all the world,
With strong denial that a good exists;—
That all is bad, imperfect, feeble, stale,
Except this critic, who outshines mankind.

Another, with a foolish zeal, will prate
Of thy great excellence, and on thy head
Heap epithet on epithet of praise
In terms preposterous, that thou wilt blush
To be so smother'd with such fulsome lies.
Another, calmer, with laudations thin,
Unsavoury and weak, will make it seem
That his good-nature, not thy merit, prompts
The baseless adulation of his pen.
Another, with a bull-dog's bark, will bay

Foul names against thee for some fancied slight
Which thou ne'er dream'dst of, and will damn thy work
For spite against the worker; while the next,
Who thinks thy faith or politics a crime,
Will bray displeasure from his monthly stall,
And prove thee dunce, that disagreest with him.

And; last of all, some solemn sage, whose nod
Trimestrial awes a world of little wits,
Will carefully avoid to name thy name,
Although thy words are in the mouths of men,
And thy ideas in their inmost hearts,
Moulding events, and fashioning thy time
To nobler efforts.—Little matters it!
Whate'er thou art, thy value will appear.
If thou art bad, no praise will buoy thee up;
If thou art good, no censure weigh thee down,
Nor silence nor neglect prevent thy fame.
So fear not thou the critics! Speak thy thought;
And, if thou 'rt worthy, in the people's love
Thy name shall live, while lasts thy mother tongue!

BRITISH FREEDOM.

I.

We want no flag, no flaunting rag,
For Liberty to fight;
We want no blaze of murderous guns,
To struggle for the right.
Our spears and swords are printed words,
The mind our battle-plain;
We've won such victories before,
And so we shall again.

II.

We love no triumphs sprung of force—
They stain her brightest cause:
'Tis not in blood that Liberty
Inscribes her civil laws.
She writes them on the people's heart
In language clear and plain;
True thoughts have moved the world before,
And so they shall again.

III.

We yield to none in earnest love
Of Freedom's cause sublime;
We join the cry, "Fraternity!"
We keep the march of Time.

And yet we grasp nor pike nor spear,
Our victories to obtain;
We've won without their aid before,
And so we shall again.

IV.

We want no aid of barricade
To show a front to wrong;
We have a citadel in truth,
More durable and strong.
Calm words, great thoughts, unflinching faith,
Have never striv'n in vain;
They've won our battles many a time,
And so they shall again.

V.

Peace, Progress, Knowledge, Brotherhood—
The ignorant may sneer,
The bad deny; but we rely
To see their triumph near.
No widows' groans shall load our cause,
Nor blood of brethren stain;
We've won without such aid before,
And so we shall again.

THE DYING MOTHER.

THE angels call me—lo, I come!
Children, I die! I'm going home!
All pangs, save one, have pass'd away,
All griefs and sufferings of clay,
Except this lingering fond distress,
That yields not to forgetfulness—
The last affection of my heart,
The pain, the grief, that we must part.

No more! a hope to sorrow given
Says earthly love may bloom in heaven,
May soar, if pure, to God's right hand:
I go, I seek the happy land.
Ah! no, not yet; the sunshine fair
Revives me for a while: the air
Blows calm and cool. Oh, living breath!
It gives me strength to look on death.

It gives me courage to implore,
By all the love you ever bore,—
A foolish, fond, but last request,—
That you will choose my place of rest,
In the green fields, beneath a tree,
Where west winds linger lovingly,

Where dews may drop and buds may bloom,
And moonlight sleep upon my tomb.

I would not that my bones should lie
(Forgive the earthly vanity)
In rotting churchyards of the town,
Dishonour'd, public, trodden down,
To be disturb'd, untomb'd, exposed,
The secrets of my grave disclosed,
Ere kind decay had blurr'd the line
Of form and feature that were mine.

Although no pangs can touch our dust,
And death is stingless on the just,
Yet grant my prayer, and lay my clod
Far from the town, beneath the sod.
Who strews a flower, or drops a tear,
Or sighs when passing crowds may hear—
Or watches fondly over graves
Where busy Traffic works her slaves?

Husband, I die—my peace is won;
I linger, but my race is run.
Oh! choose a grave where I may sleep,
Untroubled, in a silence deep;
Where thou, perchance, at evening's hour,
Mayst o'er my headstone drop a flower;
And where, each sunny Sabbath-day,
The children may come forth to pray.

Farewell, the world! Come—kiss my lips!
My soul grows dark—'tis life's eclipse.

Husband, farewell—I'm going hence—
I loved thee—love thee—parting sense,
Abide!—and let my tongue bestow,
A mother's blessing ere I go!—
The angels call me—lo, I come!
Children, I die! I'm going home!

LONDON, 1849.

FREEDOM AND LAW.

WILDEST wind that shakes the blossoms,
  Or on ocean chafes and swells,
Blows not uncontroll'd and wanton,
  But as LAW compels.

Streams that wander and meander,
  Loitering in the meads to play,
Or that burst in roaring torrents
  Into foam and spray;

Avalanches, forest-crushing,
  Fires that rage in Etna's breast,
Lava-floods and tides of ocean—
  All obey the same behest.

Law releases, Law restrains them:—
  Lo! the Moon, her forehead bent
Earthward, makes her revolution,
  Docile, beauteous, and content.

Lo! the Earth, her mighty mistress,
  In her own appointed place,
Yields, like her, sublime obedience
  To the Law that governs space.

And the godlike Sun, exhaling
  Light and Life from every pore,
On his axis, law-directed,
  Wheels majestic evermore;

Bearing with him to Orion
  All the worlds that round him shine,
To complete the awful cycle
  Of a destiny divine.

While the Stars and Constellations,
  Glowing in eternal light,
Teach the Majesty of Order,
  And that LAW is Infinite.

Is the immortal spirit freer,
  Mated with its mortal clod?
Lo! it soars, and, faith-supported,
  Claims affinity with God.

Proudly it disdains the shackles
  Of the frame to which it clings,
And would fly to heights celestial
  Upon Love's angelic wings.

But the hand of LAW restrains it;
  Narrow is the widest span,
Measured by the deeds or efforts
  Of the aspiring soul of man.

Like the imprison'd lark, that carols
To salute the dawning day,
It can see the sky, and gather
Hope and rapture from its ray.

It can see the waving branches
Of its long-lost happy bowers;
It can feel the heavenly breezes,
And the scent of meadow flowers.

But if it would strive to reach them,
It is doom'd to fruitless pain,
And with bleeding bosom struggles
At its prison-doors in vain.

If the mind be less entrammell'd,
And is freed from sensual bound;
Still the LAW restrains and moulds it,
And attracts it to the ground.

Like the young rejoicing eaglet,
Knowing nought of gyves and bars,
It may imp its virgin pinions
By a flight towards the stars;—

High above the sterile Andes,
Or the Himalayan snow,
Breasting ether, robed in sunlight,
Unimpeded it may go.

But a Law has placed its limits,
And to pass them should it dare,
Numbness falls upon its pinions,
Death o'ercanopies the air.

Such thy fate, terrestial Spirit!—
Such thy freedom;—thou mayst soar
To the empyrean summits,
Where no mortal breathed before.

But Infinitude surrounds thee;
Nature stays thee in thy flight;
Thou must turn thee, or be stricken
Powerless on thy topmost height.

Thou must travel lower, lower,—
Nearer to the earthly mould—
Safer for thee—there to fashion
New ideas out of old.

There to judge of the unfathom'd,
By the things within thy ken,
Of the ways of God Eternal
By the futile ways of men.

Yet, oh Soul! there's Freedom for thee;
Thou mayst win it;—not below;—
Not on earth with mortal vesture,
Where to love, to feel, to know,

Is to suffer; but unfetter'd,
  Thou mayst spring to riper life,
Purified from Hate and Evil,
  And Mortality and Strife.

Death is gaoler; he'll release thee;
  Through his portals thou shalt see
The perfection that awaits thee,
  If thou'rt worthy to be free.

Be thou meek, to exaltation;—
  Death shall give thee wings to soar;
Loving God, and knowing all things,
  Upwards springing evermore!

TO IMPATIENT GENIUS.

PAINTER, that with soul-creations
Wouldst attain th' applause of nations,
And deserve a name of glory
To be writ in future story,
Work thy way.
Live with Nature, love her truly,
Wisely, wholly:—and so duly
Bide thy day.
With high thoughts thy mind adorning,
Heed no critic's shallow scorning,
Nor at yelping curs repine:
Every light must cast a shadow,
So must thine.

Sculptor, with ambition glowing,
Steep thyself to overflowing
In the majesty and greatness,
Strength, and beauty, and sedateness
Of th' antique:
But forget not living Nature,
Heavenly in its form and feature,
For the Greek.
Beauty is renew'd for ever:—
Let its love support endeavour,
Though neglect enwrap thee now—
Work:—and men will find a laurel
For thy brow.

Poet, singing in the earnest
Love and Hope with which thou burnest,
And upon a lofty summit
Sounding Nature with the plummet
Of thy song,—
Grieve not if thy voice be chidden,
And thy tuneful lustre hidden
Under wrong.
Scorn not Fame, but rise above it;
Truth rewards the minds that love it;
Like the planets shine and sing;—
Noontide follows every morning,—
Summer, spring.

One and all, be up and doing;
Glory needs incessant wooing;
And if Faith—not mere ambition—
Prompts you to a noble mission,
You shall rise.
But the acorn, small and flower-like,
Must have time to flourish bower-like
To the skies.
Bide you yours:—of wealth not lustful;
Ever patient, calm, and trustful:
Years shall magnify your bole,
And produce immortal foliage
Of the soul.

THE GOLDEN CITY.

1846.

WEARY and sickening of the dull debate
And clang of politics; weary of hate
Toss'd at our heads from o'er the Atlantic main,
With foolish speeches; weary of the pain
And sorrow, and calamity, and crime
Of daily history told us in our time;
Weary of wrong that rear'd its hydra head
And hiss'd from all its mouths; dispirited
With rich man's apathy to poor men's hurt,
And poor men's ignorance of their own desert;
And for a moment hopeless of mankind
And that great cause, the nearest to my mind,
Progress—the dream of poet and of sage—
I lean'd back in my chair and dropp'd the page
Diurnal, fill'd with all the misery,
And fell asleep; if sleeping it could be
When, in its natural sequence in the brain,
Thought follow'd thought, more palpable and plain
Than when I waked; when words took music's voice,
And all my being inly did rejoice;

And what I saw, I sang of at the time,
With ease unparallel'd by waking rhyme,
And to this tune, which, many a day since then,
A haunting music has come back again.

Oh the golden city,
Shining far away!—
With its domes and steeples tall
And the sunlight over all;
With the waters of a bay
Rippling gently at its feet,
Dotted over with a fleet;
Oh the golden city—so beautiful to see!
It shall open wide its portals,
And I'll tell you if it be
The city of the happy,
The city of the free.

Oh the glorious city,
Shining far away!—
In its boundaries every man
Makes his happiness a plan,
That he studies night and day,
Till he thinks it not alone,
Like his property, his own—
Oh the glorious city—so beautiful to see!—
But spreads it round about him,
Till all are bless'd as he;
His mind an inward sunshine,
And bright eternally.

Oh the splendid city,
Gleaming far away!—

Every man, by Love possess'd,
Has a priest within his breast,
And, whene'er he kneels to pray,
Never breathes a thought unkind
Against man of other mind:
Oh the glorious city—so beautiful to see!—
But knows that God Eternal
Will shower all blessings free
On hearts that live to love Him,
And cling to Charity.

Oh the gorgeous city,
Shining far away!—
Where a Competence is His,
And each man that lives has this
For his labour of the day;
A labour not too hard,
And a bountiful reward:
Oh the glorious city—so beautiful to see!—
Where mighty wheels creative
Revolve incessantly,
And Science gains to cheer him
A daily victory.

Oh the glorious city,
Shining far away!—
Neither Misery nor Crime,
Nor the wrongs of ancient Time,
Nor the Kingly lust of sway
Ever come within its wall,
To degrade or to enthrall:

Oh the glorious city—so beautiful to see!—
But Peace, and Love, and Knowledge,
The civilizing Three,
Still prove by GOOD that has been
The BETTER that may be.

Thus dream'd I, to this rhythm, or something near,
But far more copious, musical, and clear;
And when I waken'd, still my fancy ran
'Twas not *all* dream, and that large Hopes for man
Were not such idle visions as the wise,
In days like ours, should heedlessly despise:
I thought that Love might be Religion yet,
Not form alone, but soul and substance met;
The guide, the light, the glory of the mind,
Th' electric link uniting all mankind;
That if men loved, and made their Love the Law,
All else would follow—more than ever saw
Poet or Prophet in the utmost light
Of heavenly glory opening on his sight.
But dream, or no dream, take it as it came:
It gave me hope,—it may give you the same.
And as bright Hopes make the Intention strong,
Take heart with me, and muse upon my song.

THE DEPOSITION OF KING CLOG.

King Clog was a mighty monarch,
He sat on his lofty seat,
With his golden crown and his ermine-down,
And his courtiers at his feet.
His power seem'd firm as the mountains—
Inert but strong was he;
And he ruled the land with a heavy hand
And a placid tyranny.
And whenever a boon was ask'd him,
He stared with a calm amaze,
And said, "Ye foolish people,
Ye must stand on the ancient ways."

And long o'er the suffering nations
King Clog and his courtiers ruled,
And men half-wise, who could use their eyes,
And were taught, and train'd, and school'd,
Conceived this ponderous monarch
Was bountiful, wise, and good;
And held it just to kneel in the dust
And smear him with gratitude.
And whenever the people murmur'd,
The king and his statesmen frown'd,
But stoutly refused to aid them;—
And so the world went round.

He was a drowsy monarch,
They were a drowsy crew,
And from hour to hour, in their pride of power,
Duller and drowsier grew:
But a cry for reformation,
Which rose for evermore,
Disturb'd their sleep with its mutterings deep,
And stirr'd them to the core.
"We will not change," said the courtiers,
"For change is ever an ill;
We'll crush these restless people,
If we cannot keep them still."

But CLOG, like all things mortal,
Decay'd as he grew old,
He loved to dose, in warm repose,
High on his throne of gold.
And the people saw his weakness,
And shouted in his ear,
"We've groan'd too long in sorrow and wrong:
Awake! let the Right appear!"
And the king, with eyes half-open'd,
A lingering answer sent:
"Let me alone, ye rabble—
And toil—and be content!"

"We're weary of our bondage,"
Said they: "Oh, king, be just!—
We delve and spin, but cannot win
Our raiment and our crust;

We ask no boon from favour
That Justice should not give;
From cradle to grave we groan and slave,
And die that we may live."
But CLOG replied, hard-hearted,
"Your sires were wise as you;
They never complain'd;—poor wretches,
Ye know not what ye do!"

But still the people clamour'd,
And the cry o'er the nations spread—
"Freedom of speech, freedom to teach,
Freedom to earn our bread;
These must we have, O monarch!
Whether you will or no;—
Too long we've pined, body and mind,
In ignorance and woe."
"Let me alone, I pray you,"
Said CLOG, "nor vex my soul;
As the world has roll'd for ages,
So must it ever roll."

And he folded his arms on his bosom,
And slept, and never heard
The measured beat of the trampling feet,
And the oft-repeated word
That came from the solemn conclave
Of the people, met to plan
Some better laws, to aid the cause
Of the happiness of man;

Nor the voices loud resounding,
  Like waves upon the shore,
That proclaim'd to the listening nations
  That CLOG should rule no more.

But JOG, the next successor,
  Who understood his time,
Stepp'd on the throne :—" Father, begone ;
  To linger is a crime.
Go to thy bed and slumber,
  And leave the world to me ;
Thy mission 's done ; thy race is run—
  I'm ruler of the free."
So CLOG retired, obedient,
  And JOG, his son, was crown'd.
We hope he'll govern better :—
  And so the world goes round.

STREET COMPANIONS.

WHENE'ER through Gray's Inn porch I stray,
I meet a spirit by the way;
He wanders with me all alone,
And talks with me in under-tone.

The crowd is busy seeking gold,
It cannot see what I behold;
I and the spirit pass along
Unknown, unnoticed, in the throng.

While on the grass the children run,
And maids go loitering in the sun,
I roam beneath the ancient trees,
And talk with him of mysteries.

The dull brick houses of the square,
The bustle of the thoroughfare,
The sounds, the sights, the crush of men,
Are present but forgotten then.

I see them, but I heed them not;
I hear, but silence clothes the spot;
All voices die upon my brain
Except that spirit's in the lane.

He breathes to me his burning thought,
He utters words with wisdom fraught,
He tells me truly what I am—
I walk with mighty Verulam.

He goes with me through crowded ways,
A friend and mentor in the maze,
Through Chancery Lane to Lincoln's Inn,
To Fleet Street, through the moil and din.

I meet another spirit there,
A blind old man with forehead fair,
Who ever walks the right-hand side,
Toward the fountain of St. Bride.

Amid the peal of jangling bells,
Or people's roar that falls and swells,
The whirl of wheels and tramp of steeds,
He talks to me of noble deeds.

I hear his voice above the crush,
As to and fro the people rush;
Benign and calm, upon his face
Sits Melancholy, robed in grace.

He hath no need of common eyes,
He sees the fields of Paradise;
He sees and pictures unto mine
A gorgeous vision, most divine.

He tells the story of the Fall,
He names the fiends in battle-call,
And shows my soul, in wonder dumb,
Heaven, Earth, and Pandemonium.

He tells of Lycidas the good,
And the sweet lady in the wood,
And teaches wisdom high and holy,
In mirth and heavenly melancholy.

And oftentimes, with courage high,
He raises Freedom's rallying cry;
And, ancient leader of the van,
Asserts the dignity of man—

Asserts the rights with trumpet tongue,
That Justice from Oppression wrung,
And poet, patriot, statesman, sage,
Guides by his own a future age.

With such companions at my side
I float on London's human tide;
An atom on its billows thrown,
But lonely never, nor alone.

THE LIGHT IN THE WINDOW.

Late or early home returning,
In the starlight or the rain,
I beheld that lonely candle
Shining from his window-pane.
Ever o'er his tatter'd curtain,
Nightly looking, I could scan,
Aye inditing,
Writing—writing,
The pale figure of a man;
Still discern behind him fall
The same shadow on the wall.

Far beyond the murky midnight,
By dim burning of my oil,
Filling aye his rapid leaflets,
I have watch'd him at his toil;
Watch'd his broad and seamy forehead,
Watch'd his white industrious hand,

Ever passing
And repassing;
Watch'd and strove to understand
What impell'd it—gold, or fame—
Bread, or bubble of a name.

Oft I've ask'd, debating vainly
In the silence of my mind,
What the services he render'd
To his country or his kind;
Whether tones of ancient music,
Or the sound of modern gong,
Wisdom holy,
Humours lowly,
Sermon, essay, novel, song,
Or philosophy sublime,
Fill'd the measure of his time.

No one sought him, no one knew him,
Undistinguish'd was his name;
Never had his praise been utter'd
By the oracles of fame.
Scanty fare and decent raiment,
Humble lodging, and a fire—
These he sought for,
These he wrought for,
And he gain'd his meek desire;
Teaching men by written word—
Clinging to a hope deferr'd.

So he lived. At last I miss'd him;
Still might evening twilight fall,
But no taper lit his lattice—
Lay no shadow on his wall.
In the winter of his seasons,
In the midnight of his day,
'Mid his writing,
And inditing,
Death had beckon'd him away,
Ere the sentence he had plann'd
Found completion at his hand.

But this man, so old and nameless,
Left behind him projects large,
Schemes of progress undeveloped,
Worthy of a nation's charge;
Noble fancies uncompleted,
Germs of beauty immatured,
Only needing
Kindly feeding
To have flourish'd and endured;
Meet reward in golden store
To have lived for evermore.

Who shall tell what schemes majestic
Perish in the active brain?
What humanity is robb'd of,
Ne'er to be restored again?
What we lose, because we honour

Overmuch the mighty dead,
And dispirit
Living merit,
Heaping scorn upon its head?
Or perchance, when kinder grown,
Leaving it to die—alone?

MARY AND LADY MARY;

OR,

NEXT-DOOR NEIGHBOURS.

THE Lady Mary's placid eyes
Beam with no hopes, no memories;
Beneath their lids no tear-drops flow,
For Love or Pity, Joy or Woe.
She never knows, too barren she,
The fruitfulness of sympathy;
She never weeps for others' pain,
Or smiles, except in her disdain.

Her face is pallid as the pearl,
Her hair is sleek, without a curl;
With finger-tip she condescends
To touch the fingers of her friends,
As if she fear'd their palms might brand
Some moral stigma on her hand;
Her pulse is calm, milk-white her skin,
She hath not blood enough to sin.

A very pattern, sage and staid,
Of all her sex—a model maid;
Clear star—bright paragon of men—
She breaks no law of all the ten;

Pure to the sight as snow-peak'd hill—
As inaccessible and chill;
In sunshine—but repelling heat—
And freezing in her own conceit.

If ever known to breathe a sigh,
It was for lack of flattery.
Though cold, insensible, and dull,
Admirers call her beautiful;
She sucks their incense, breathes it, dotes
On her own praise, that gently floats
On Fashion's wave—and lies in wait
To catch admirers of her state.

In publish'd charities her name
Stands foremost, for she buys her fame;
At church men see her thrice a week,
In spirit proud, in aspect meek;
Wearing Devotion like a mask,
So marble cold, that sinners ask,
Beholding her at Mercy's throne,
"Is this a woman or a stone?"

But different, far, the little maid,
That dwells unnoticed in the shade
Of Lady Mary's pomp and power;
A Mary, too, a simple flower,
With face all health, with cheeks all smile,
Undarken'd by one cloud of guile;
And ruddy lips that seem to say,
"Come, kiss me, children, while ye may."

A cordial hand, a chubby arm,
And hazel eyes, large, soft, and warm;
Dark hair in curls, a snow-like bust,
A look all innocence and trust,
Lit up at times by sunny mirth,
Like summer smiling on the earth;
A ringing laugh, whose every note
Bursts in clear music from her throat.

A painter's daughter—poor, perchance,
But rich in native elegance;
God bless the maid—she may not be
Without *some* touch of vanity.
She twines red rosebuds in her hair,
And smiles to know herself so fair;
And quite believes, like other belles,
The pleasant tale her mirror tells.

A very woman, full of tears,
Hopes, blushes, tendernesses, fears,
Griefs, laughter, kindness, joys and sighs,
Loves, likings, friendships, sympathies;
A heart to feel for every woe,
And pity, if not dole, bestow;
A hand to give from scanty store,
A look to wish the offering more.

In artless faith and virtue strong,
Too loving to do Love a wrong;
She takes delight in simple things,
And in the sunshine works and sings.

Sweet bird! so meekly innocent,
The foulest hawk that ever rent
A trusting heart, would gaze, and fly,
And spare her in her purity.

Take Lady Mary ye who will,
Her woods, her castle on the hill,
Her lands o'er half a county spread—
And wither in her loveless bed;
But give me Mary, frank and free,
Her beauty, grace, and modesty:
I pass My Lady in the mart—
I take the Woman with the heart.

ABOVE AND BELOW.

MIGHTY river, oh, mighty river,
Rolling in ebb and flow for ever,
Through the city so vast and old;
Through massive bridges—by domes and spires,
Crown'd with the smoke of a myriad fires;—
City of majesty, power, and gold;—
Thou lovest to float on thy waters dull
The white-wing'd fleets so beautiful,
And the lordly steamers speeding along,
Wind defying, and swift and strong;
Thou bearest them all on thy motherly breast,
Laden with riches, at Trade's behest—
Bounteous Trade, whose wine and corn
Stock the garner and fill the horn;
Who gives us Luxury, Joy, and Pleasure,
Stintless, sumless, out of measure—
Thou art a rich and a mighty river,
Rolling in ebb and flow for ever.

Doleful river, oh, doleful river,
Pale on thy breast the moonbeams quiver,
Through the city so drear and cold—
City of sorrows hard to bear,
Of guilt, injustice, and despair—
City of miseries untold;—

Thou hidest below, in thy treacherous waters,
The death-cold forms of Beauty's daughters;
The corses pale of the young and sad—
Of the old whom sorrow has goaded mad—
Mothers of babes that cannot know
The sires that left them to their woe—
Women forlorn, and men that run
The race of passion, and die undone;
Thou takest them all to thy careless wave,
Thou givest them all a ready grave;
Thou art a black and a doleful river,
Rolling in ebb and flow for ever.

In ebb and flow for ever and ever—
So rolls the world, thou murky river!
So rolls the tide, above and below:
Above, the rower impels his boat;
Below, with the current the dead men float!—
The waves may smile in the sunny glow,
While above, in the glitter, and pomp, and glare,
The flags of the vessels flap the air;
But below, in the silent under-tide,
The waters vomit the wretch that died.
Above, the sound of the music swells,
From the passing ship, from the city bells;
From below there cometh a gurgling breath,
As the desperate diver yields to death:
Above and below the waters go,
Bearing their burden of Joy or Woe;
Rolling along, thou mighty river,
In ebb and flow for ever and ever!

JOHN LITTLEJOHN.

JOHN LITTLEJOHN was stanch and strong,
Upright and downright, scorning wrong;
He gave good weight, and paid his way,
He thought for himself, and he said his say.
Whenever a rascal strove to pass,
Instead of silver, money of brass,
He took his hammer, and said, with a frown,
"*The coin is spurious, nail it down.*"

John Littlejohn was firm and true,
You could not cheat him in "two and two;"
When foolish arguers, might and main,
Darken'd and twisted the clear and plain,
He saw through the mazes of their speech
The simple truth beyond their reach;
And crushing their logic, said, with a frown,
"*Your coin is spurious, nail it down.*"

John Littlejohn maintain'd the Right,
Through storm and shine, in the world's despite;
When fools or quacks desired his vote,
Dosed him with arguments, learn'd by rote,

Or by coaxing, threats, or promise, tried
To gain his support to the wrongful side,
"*Nay, nay,*" said John, with an angry frown,
"*Your coin is spurious, nail it down.*"

When told that kings had a right divine,
And that the people were herds of swine,
That the rich alone were fit to rule,
That the poor were unimproved by school,
That ceaseless toil was the proper fate
Of all but the wealthy and the great,
John shook his head, and swore, with a frown,
"*The coin is spurious, nail it down.*"

When told that events might justify
A false and crooked policy,
That a decent hope of future good
Might excuse departure from rectitude,
That a lie, if white, was a small offence,
To be forgiven by men of sense,
"*Nay, nay,*" said John, with a sigh and frown,
"*The coin is spurious, nail it down.*"

When told from the pulpit or the press
That Heaven was a place of exclusiveness,
That none but those could enter there
Who knelt with the "orthodox" at prayer,
And held all virtues out of their pale
As idle works of no avail,
John's face grew dark, as he swore, with a frown,
"*The coin is spurious, nail it down.*"

Whenever the world our eyes would blind
With false pretences of such a kind,
With humbug, cant, and bigotry,
Or a specious, sham philosophy,
With wrong dress'd up in the guise of right,
And darkness passing itself for light,
Let us imitate John, and exclaim, with a frown,
"*The coins are spurious, nail them down.*"

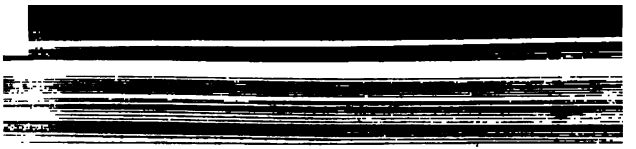
THE POOR MAN'S BIRD.

A YEAR ago I had a child,
A little daughter fair and mild;
More precious than my life to me,
She sleeps beneath the churchyard tree.
Oh! she was good as she was fair,
Her presence was like balmy air;
She was a radiance in my room,
She was sunlight in my gloom.

She loved thee well, thou little bird,
Her voice and thine were ever heard;
They roused me when the morning shone,
But now I hear thy voice alone.
She call'd me gently to her side,
Gave me her bird, and, smiling, died.
Thou wert her last bequest to me;
I loved her fondly—I love thee.

'Tis true, I often think it hard,
Sweet lark, to keep thee here imbarr'd,
Whilst thou art singing all day long,
As if the fields inspired thy song,

THE POOR MAN'S BIRD.



As if the flowers, the woods, the streams,
Were present in thy waking dreams;
But yet, how can I let thee fly?
What couldst thou do with liberty?

What couldst *thou* do?—Alas, for me!
What should *I* do if wanting thee,
Sole relic of my Lucy dear?
There needs no talk—thou'rt prisoner here.
But I will make thy durance sweet,
I'll bring thee turf to cool thy feet;
Fresh turf, with daisies tipp'd in pink,
And water from the well to drink.

I need thee. Were it not to choose,
Ere sunshine dry the morning dews,
Thy fresh green turf, I should not stray
Out to the fields the live-long day;
I should be captive to the town,
And waste my life in alleys brown;
Thy wants impel me to the sward,
And Nature's face is my reward.

Sweet bird, thou wakenest by thy song
Bright memories and affections strong;
At sight of thee I dream of flowers,
And running streams, and branching bowers;
But most of her whose little face
Was luminous with love and grace;
Thou art a link I may not break—
I love thee for my Lucy's sake.

UNKNOWN ROMANCES.

I.

Oft have I wander'd when the first faint light
Of morning shone upon the steeple-vanes
Of sleeping London, through the silent night,
Musing on memories of joys and pains;—
And looking down long vistas of dim lanes
And shadowy streets, one after other spread
In endless coil, have thought what hopes now dead
Once bloom'd in every house, what tearful rains
Women have wept, for husband, sire, or son;
What love and sorrow ran their course in each,
And what great silent tragedies were done;—
And wish'd the dumb and secret walls had speech,
That they might whisper to me, one by one,
The sad true lessons that their walls might teach.

II.

Close and forgetful witnesses, they hide,
In nuptial chamber, attic, or saloon,
Many a legend sad of desolate bride,
And mournful mother, blighted all too soon;
Of strong men's agony, despair, and pride,
And mental glory darken'd ere its noon.

But let the legends perish in their place,
For well I know where'er these walls have seen
Humanity's upturn'd and heavenly face,
That there has virtue, there has courage been;—
That e'en 'mid passions foul, and vices base,
Some ray of goodness interposed between.
Ye voiceless houses, ever as I gaze,
This moral flashes from your walls serene.

THE FLOATING STRAW.

A THOUGHT IN THE PANIC, 1847.

THE wild waves are my nightly pillows,
Beneath me roll the Atlantic billows;
And as I rest on my couch of brine,
I watch the eternal planets shine.
Ever I ride
On a harmless tide,
Fearing nought—enjoying all things—
Undisturb'd by great or small things.

Alas! for the lordly vessel
That sails so gallantly!
The winds may dash it,
The storms may wash it,
The lightnings rend its tall masts three;
But neither the wind, nor the rain, nor the sea,
Can injure me—can injure me!
The lightnings cannot strike me down,
Whirlwinds wreck, or whirlpools drown;
And the ship to be lost ere the break of morn,
May pass o'er my head in saucy scorn;

And when the Night unveils its face,
I may float, unharm'd, in my usual place,
And the ship may show to the pitying stars
No remnant but her broken spars.

Among the shells
In the ocean dells
The ships, the crews, and the captains lie;
But the floating straw looks up to the sky.
And the humble and contented man,
Unknown to Fortune, escapes her ban,
And rides secure when breakers leap,
And mighty ships go down to the deep.

May pleasant breezes waft them home
That plough with their keels the driving foam!
Heaven be their hope, and Truth their law;—
There needs no prayer for the floating straw!

A QUESTION ANSWERED.

WHAT to do to make thy fame
  Live beyond thee in the tomb?
And thine honourable name
  Shine, a star, through History's gloom?

Seize the Spirit of thy Time,
  Take the measure of his height,
Look into his eyes sublime,
  And imbue thee with their light.

Know his words e'er they are spoken,
  And with utterance loud and clear,
Firm, persuasive, and unbroken,
  Breathe them in the people's ear.

Think whate'er the spirit thinks,
  Feel thyself, whate'er he feels,
Drink at fountains where he drinks,
  And reveal what he reveals.

And whate'er thy medium be,
  Canvas, stone, or printed sheet,
Fiction, or philosophy,
  Or a ballad for the street;

Or, perchance, with passion fraught,
  Spoken words, like lightnings thrown,
Tell the people all thy thought,
  And the world shall be thine own!

WHAT MIGHT BE DONE.

What might be done if men were wise—
What glorious deeds, my suffering brother,
Would they unite,
In love and right,
And cease their scorn for one another?

Oppression's heart might be imbued
With kindling drops of loving-kindness,
And Knowledge pour,
From shore to shore,
Light on the eyes of mental blindness.

All slavery, warfare, lies, and wrongs,
All vice and crime might die together;
And wine and corn,
To each man born,
Be free as warmth in summer weather.

The meanest wretch that ever trod,
The deepest sunk in guilt and sorrow,
Might stand erect,
In self-respect,
And share the teeming world to-morrow

What might be done? *This* might be done,
And more than *this*, my suffering brother—
More than the tongue
Ever said or sung,
If men were wise and loved each other.

THE MOWERS.

AN ANTICIPATION OF THE CHOLERA, 1848.

DENSE on the stream the vapours lay,
Thick as wool on the cold highway;
Spongy and dim, each lonely lamp
Shone o'er the streets so dull and damp;
The moonbeam could not pierce the cloud
That swathed the city like a shroud.
There stood three Shapes on the bridge alone,
Three figures by the coping-stone;
Gaunt, and tall, and undefined,
Spectres built of mist and wind;
Changing ever in form and height,
But black and palpable to sight.

"This is a city fair to see,"
Whisper'd one of the fearful three;
"A mighty tribute it pays to me.
Into its river, winding slow,
Thick and foul from shore to shore,
The vessels come, the vessels go,
And teeming lands their riches pour

It spreads beneath the murky sky
A wilderness of masonry;
Huge, unshapely, overgrown,
Dingy brick and blacken'd stone.
Mammon is its chief and lord,
Monarch slavishly adored;
Mammon sitting side by side
With Pomp, and Luxury, and Pride;
Who calls his large dominion theirs,
Nor dream a portion is Despair's.

"Countless thousands bend to me
In rags and purple, in hovel and hall,
And pay the tax of Misery
With tears, and blood, and spoken gall.
Whenever they cry
For aid to die,
I give them courage to dare the worst,
And leave their ban on a world accursed.
I show them the river so black and deep,
They take the plunge, they sink to sleep;
I show them poison, I show them rope,
They rush to death without a hope.
Poison, and rope, and pistol-ball,
Welcome either, welcome all!
I am the lord of the teeming town—
I mow them down, I mow them down!"

"Ay, thou art great, but greater I,"
The second spectre made reply;

"Thou rulest with a frown austere,
Thy name is synonym of Fear.
But I, despotic and hard as thou,
Have a laughing lip, an open brow.
I build a temple in every lane,
I have a palace in every street;
And the victims throng to the doors amain,
And wallow like swine beneath my feet.
To me the strong man gives his health,
The wise man reason, the rich man wealth;
Maids their virtue, youth its charms,
And mothers the children in their arms.
Thou art a slayer of mortal men—
Thou of the unit, I of the ten;
Great thou art, but greater I,
To decimate humanity.
'Tis *I* am the lord of the teeming town—
I mow them down, I mow them down!"

"Vain boasters to exult at death,"
The third replied, "so feebly done;
I ope my jaws, and with a breath
Slay thousands while you think of one.
All the blood that Cæsar spill'd,
All that Alexander drew,
All the hosts by 'glory' kill'd,
From Agincourt to Waterloo,
Compared with those whom I have slain,
Are but a river to the main.

"I brew disease in stagnant pools,
And wandering here, disporting there,
Favour'd much by knaves and fools,
I poison streams, I taint the air;
I shake from my locks the spreading Pest,
I keep the Typhus at my behest;
In filth and slime
I crawl, I climb;—
I find the workman at his trade,
I blow on his lips, and down he lies;
I look in the face of the ruddiest maid,
And straight the fire forsakes her eyes—
She droops, she sickens, and she dies;
I stint the growth of babes new-born,
Or shear them off like standing corn;
I rob the sunshine of its glow,
I poison all the winds that blow;
Whenever they pass, they suck my breath,
And freight their wings with certain death.
'Tis *I* am the lord of the crowded town—
I mow them down, I mow them down!

"But great as we are, there cometh one
Greater than you—greater than I,
To aid the deeds that shall be done,
To end the work that we've begun,
And thin this thick humanity.
I see his footmarks east and west,
I hear his tread in the silence fall,
He shall not sleep, he shall not rest—
He comes to aid us one and all!

He shall be lord of the swarming town
And mow them down, and mow them d

SAID I TO MYSELF, SAID I.

I'm poor and quite unknown,
  I have neither fame nor rank;
My labour is all I own,
  I have no gold at the bank;
I'm one of the common crowd,
  Despised of the passers-by,
Contemn'd of the rich and proud—
  Said I to myself, said I.

I want, and I cannot obtain,
  The luxuries of the earth;
My raiment is scant and plain,
  And I live in the fear of dearth;
While others can laugh or sing,
  I have ever some cause to sigh;
I'm a weary wanderling—
  Said I to myself, said I.

But is this grieving just?
  Is it wise to fret and wail?
Is it right, thou speck of dust,
  Thine envy should prevail?

Is it fitting thou shouldst close
  Thy sight to the sunny sky,
And an utter dark suppose?
  Said I to myself, said I.

If poor, thou hast thy health;
  If humble, thou art strong;
And the lark, that knows not wealth,
  Ever sings a happy song.
The flowers rejoice in the air,
  And give thy needs the lie;—
Thou'rt a fool to foster care,
  Said I to myself, said I.

If the wants of thy pride be great,
  The needs of thy health are small,
And the world is the man's estate
  Who can wisely enjoy it all.
For him is the landscape spread,
  For him do the breezes ply,
For him is the day-beam shed—
  Said I to myself, said I.

For him are the oceans roll'd,
  For him do the rivers run,
For him doth the year unfold
  Her bounties to the sun;
For him, if his heart be pure,
  Shall common things supply
All pleasures that endure—
  Said I to myself, said I.

For him each blade of grass
  Waves pleasure as it grows;
For him, as the light clouds pass,
  A spirit of beauty flows;
For him, as the streamlets leap,
  Or the winds on the tree-tops sigh,
Comes a music sweet and deep—
  Said I to myself, said I.

Nor of earth are his joys alone,
  How mean soever his state—
On him from the starry zone
  His ministering angels wait;
With him in voiceless thought
  They hold communion high;
By them are his fancies fraught—
  Said I to myself, said I.

I will mould my life afresh,
  I will circumscribe desire;
Farewell to ye, griefs of flesh!
  And let my soul aspire.
I will make my wishes few,
  That my joys may multiply;
Adieu, false wants, adieu!—
  Said I to myself, said I.

AN APPEAL TO PARIS.

1847.

Beautiful Paris! morning star of nations!
The Lucifer of cities, lifting high
The beacon blaze of young democracy!
Medina and Gomorrha both in one—
Medina of a high and holy creed
To be developed in a coming time!
Gomorrha, rampant with all vice and guilt—
Luxurious, godless, grovelling, soaring Paris,
Laden with intellect, and yet not wise—
Metropolis of satire and lampoon,
Of wit, of elegance, of mirth, of song,
And fearful tragedies done day by day,
Which put our hair on end in the open streets—
The busy hive of awful memories,
The potent arbiter of popular will,
The great electric centre whence the shocks
Of pulsing freedom vibrate through the world—
Beautiful Paris! sacred to our hearts,
With all thy folly, all thy wickedness—
If but for Bailly, Vergniaud, Gensonné,
And noblest Roland, she of Roman soul,
And the great patriots and friends of man
Who went to death for holy liberty—

Lift up thy voice, O Paris! once again,
And speak the thought that labours in thy breast;
Shake off thy gauds and tinsels—be thyself;
Cease thy lewd jests, and heartless revelries,
Thy adoration of all worthless things,
Thy scorn, thy sarcasm, and thy unbelief;
And in the conflict and the march of men
Do justice to thy nature, and complete
The glorious work, so gloriously begun
By the great souls of pregnant eighty-nine.
Come forth, oh, Paris! freed from vice and stain,
Like a young warrior dallying too long
With loving women, wasting precious hours
In base delights and enervating sloth;
Who, when he shakes them off, puts back his hair
From his broad brow, and places on his head
The plumèd helmet—throws his velvets off,
And swathes his vigorous limbs in glancing steel,
To lead true hearts to struggle for mankind.
Or if no more, Soldier of Liberty!
Thou 'lt lead the nations—stand upon the hill,
And, like a prophet, preach a holy creed
Of freedom, progress, peace, and happiness;
And all the world shall listen to thy voice,
And Tyranny, hyæna big with young,
Dreading the sound, shall farrow in affright,
And drop, still-born, her sanguinary cubs,
And many a bloody feud be spared mankind.
Poland again, with desperate grasp, shall seize
The neck of her enslaver, and extort
Full justice from his terror; Hungary,
Ermined and crown'd, shall sit in her own seat

In peaceful state and sober majesty;
And Italy, unloosening her bonds
By her strong will, shall be at last the home
Of broadly based and virtuous liberty,
And in her bosom nurture evermore,
Not the fierce virtues of her Roman youth,
But the calm blessings of her later time—
Science, and art, and civilizing trade,
Divine philosophy, diviner song,
And true religion reconciled with man.

Speak out, O Paris! purify thyself
By noble thoughts, and deeds will follow them.
The world has need of thee. Humanity
Droops for thy dalliance with degraded things,
Alien, and most unworthy of the soul
That sleeps within thee. Rouse thyself, O Paris!
The time expects thee. Pyrenees, and Alps,
And Appenines, and snow-clad Balkans, wait,
With all their echoes, to repeat the words
Which thou *must* utter! Thou hast slumber'd long—
Long dallied. Speak! The world will answer thee!

THOUGHTS.

TRUE thoughts, your days of grief are done,
No more shall scorn or hate impede you;—
Born in the light, where'er the sun
Shines on mankind, mankind shall heed you.
So grow, ye grains of mustard-seed,
Grow each into a tree;
And kindle, sparks, to beal-fires bright,
That all the earth may see;
And spread, ye thoughts of Truth and Right,
O'er all humanity!

Time *was*, when thoughts bore tears and death
To the wise few that dared to raise them;
Time *is*, when thoughts are living breath,
And the world's throbbing heart obeys them.
So grow, ye grains of mustard-seed,
Grow each into a tree;
And kindle, sparks, to beal-fires bright,
That all the earth may see;
And spread, ye workers for the Right,
Onwards eternally!

CLEON AND I.

Cleon hath a million acres,
  Ne'er a one have I;
Cleon dwelleth in a palace,
  In a cottage I;
Cleon hath a dozen fortunes,
  Not a penny I:
Yet the poorer of the twain is
  Cleon, and not I.

Cleon, true, possesseth acres,
  But the landscape I;
Half the charms to me it yieldeth
  Money cannot buy;
Cleon harbours sloth and dulness,
  Freshening vigour I;
He in velvet, I in fustian—
  Richer man am I.

Cleon is a slave to grandeur,
  Free as thought am I;
Cleon fees a score of doctors,
  Need of none have I;

Wealth-surrounded, care-environ'd,
  Cleon fears to die;
Death may come, he'll find me ready;—
  Happier man am I.

Cleon sees no charms in Nature,
  In a daisy I;
Cleon hears no anthems singing
  In the sea and sky;
Nature sings to me for ever,
  Earnest listener I;
State for state, with all attendants,
  Who would change? Not I.

THE PHANTOMS OF ST. SEPULCHRE

[It may be necessary to inform the reader una
with London, that the church of St. Sepulchre is cl
gaol of Newgate, and that its bell is tolled when a c
to be executed. Few will need to be reminded that
stories related are not fabulous.]

"Didst ever see a hanging?"—"No, not ou
Nor ever wish to see such scandal done.
But once I saw a wretch condemn'd to die
A lean-faced, bright-eyed youth, who made
At the recital of a dream he had.
He was not sane, and yet he was not mad

Open'd his eyes to see,—an actual glimpse
Into the world of spectres and of imps
Vouchsafed to him on threshold of the grave.
List! and I'll give it in the words he gave:—

"'Ay, you may think that I am crazed,
But what I saw, that did I see.
These walls are thick, my brain is sick,
And yet mine eyes saw lucidly.
Through the joists and through the stones
I could look as through a glass:
And, from this dungeon damp and cold,
I watch'd the motley people pass.
All day long, rapid and strong,
Roll'd to and fro the living stream;
But in the night I saw a sight—
I cannot think it was a dream.

"'Old St. Sepulchre's bell will toll
At eight to-morrow for my soul;
And thousands, not much better than I,
Will throng around to see me die;
And many will bless their happy fate
That they ne'er fell from their high estate,
Or did such deed as I have done;
Though, from the rise to the set of sun,
They cheat their neighbours all their days,
And gather gold in slimy ways.
But my soul feels strong, and my sight grows clear,
As my death-hour approaches near,
And in its presence I will tell
The very truth, as it befell.

Were white last night when I look'd forth,
And the sharp clear stars seem'd to dance in
Rock'd by the fierce winds of the north.

"'The houses dull seem'd numb with frost,
The streets seem'd wider than of yore,
And the straggling passengers trod, like gh
Silently on the pathway frore;
When I look'd through that churchyard ra
And thought of the bell that should ring n
And saw three women, sad and pale,
Sitting together on a tomb.

"'A fearful sight it was to see,
As up they rose and look'd at me.
Sunken were their cheeks and eyes;
Blue-cold were their feet, and bare;
Lean and yellow were their hands;
Long and scanty was their hair;
And round their necks I saw the ropes

From the rank and clammy ground.
I counted them—I knew them all,
Each with its rope around its neck,
Marshall'd by the churchyard wall.
The stiff policeman, passing along,
Saw them not, nor made delay;
A reeling bacchanal, shouting a song,
Look'd at the clock and went his way;
A troop of girls with painted cheeks,
Laughing and yelling in drunken glee,
Pass'd like a gust, and never look'd
At the sight so palpable to me.
I saw them—heard them—felt their breath
Musty and raw and damp as death!

"'These women three, these fearful shapes,
Look'd at me through Newgate stone,
And raised their fingers, skinny and lank,
Whispering low in under-tone:—
'His hour draws near,—he's one of us,—
His gibbet is built,—his noose is tied;
They have put his name on the coffin-lid:
The law of blood shall be satisfied.
He shall rest with us, and his name shall be
A by-word and a mockery.'

"'I whisper'd to one, 'What hast thou done?'
She answer'd, whispering, and I heard—
Although a chime rang at the time—
Every sentence, every word,
Clear above the pealing bells:—
'I was mad, and slew my child;

Better than life, God knows, I loved it;
But pain and hunger drove me wild,
Scorn and hunger, and grief and care;
And I slew it in my despair.
And for this deed they raised the gibbet;
For this deed the noose they tied;
And I hung and swung in the sight of men,
And the law of blood was satisfied.'

"'I said to the second, 'What didst thou?'
Her keen eyes flash'd unearthly shine.
'I married a youth when I was young,
And thought all happiness was mine;
But they stole him from me to fight the French;
And I was left in the world alone,
To beg or steal, to live or die,
Robb'd of my stay, my all, my own.
England stole my lord from me,—
I stole a ribbon, was caught and tried;
And I hung and swung in the sight of men,
And the law of blood was satisfied.'

"'I said to the third, 'What crime was thine?'
'Crime!' she answer'd, in accents meek,
'The babe that sucks at its mother's breast,
And smiles with its little dimpled cheek,
Is not more innocent than I.
But truth was feeble,—error was strong;
And guiltless of a deed of shame,
Men's justice did me cruel wrong.

They would not hear my truthful words:
They thought me fill'd with stubborn pride;
And I hung and swung in the sight of men,
And the law of blood was satisfied.'

"'Then one and all, by that churchyard wall,
Raised their skinny hands at me;
Their voices mingling like the sound
Of rustling leaves in a withering tree:
'His hour has come, he's one of us;
His gibbet is built, his noose is tied;
His knell shall ring, and his corpse shall swing,
And the law of blood shall be satisfied.'

"'They vanish'd! I saw them, one by one,
With their bare blue feet on the drifted snow
Sink like a thaw, when the sun is up,
To their wormy solitudes below.
Though you may deem this was a dream,
My facts are tangible facts to me;
For the sight glows clear as death draws near
And looks into futurity.'"

THE LITTLE MOLES.

When grasping tyranny offends,
Or angry bigots frown;
When rulers plot, for selfish ends,
To keep the nations down;
When statesmen form unholy league
To drive the world to war;
When knaves in palaces intrigue
For ribbons or a star—
We raise our heads, survey their deeds,
And cheerily reply,
Grub, little moles, grub under ground,
There's sunshine in the sky.

When canting hypocrites combine
To curb a free man's thought,
And hold all doctrine undivine
That holds their canting nought;
When round their narrow pale they plod,
And scornfully assume
That all without are cursed of God,
And justify the doom,—
We think of God's eternal love,
And strong in hope reply,
Grub, little moles, grub under ground,
There's sunshine in the sky.

When greedy authors wield the pen
To please the vulgar town,
Depict great thieves as injured men
And heroes of renown;
Pander to prejudice unclean,
Apologize for crime,
And daub the vices of the mean
With flattery like slime;
For MILTON'S craft, for SHAKSPERE'S tongue
We blush, but yet reply—
Grub, little moles, grub under ground,
There's sunshine in the sky.

When smug philosophers survey
The various climes of earth,
And mourn, poor sagelings of a day!
Its too prolific birth;
And prove by figure, rule, and plan,
The large fair world too small
To feed the multitudes of man
That flourish on its ball;
We view the vineyards on the hills,
Or corn-fields waving high;—
Grub, little moles, grub under ground,
There's sunshine in the sky.

When men complain of humankind
In misanthropic mood,
And thinking evil things, grow blind
To presence of the good;

When, wall'd in prejudices strong,
They urge that evermore
The world is fated to go wrong
For going wrong before,—
We feel the truths they cannot feel,
And smile as we reply,
Grub, little moles, grub under ground,
There's sunshine in the sky.

LET US ALONE.

MANY—and yet our fate is one,
And little after all we crave—
Enjoyment of the common sun,
Fair passage to the common grave;
Our bread and fire, our plain attire,
The free possession of our own.
Rulers be wise! and kings and czars,
Let us alone—let us alone.

We have a faith, we have a law;
A faith in God, a hope in man;
And own, with reverence and awe,
Love universal as His plan.
To Charity we bow the knee,
The earth's refiner and our own.
Bigots, and fighters about words,
Let us alone—let us alone.

The world is the abode of men,
And not of demons stark and blind;
And Eden's self might bloom again,
If men did justice to mankind.

We want no more of Nature's store,
Than Nature meant to be our own.
Masters and gerents of the earth,
Let us alone—let us alone.

Your meddling brought us grief and care,
And added misery day by day;
We're not so foolish as we were,
Nor fashion'd of such ductile clay;
Your petty jars, your wicked wars,
Have lost their charm, the gilding's gone:
Victorious marshals, vaulting kings,
Let us alone—let us alone.

Though dwellers in a little isle,
We bear no hate to other lands,
And think that Peace on earth might smile
If we and others join'd our hands.
In Reason's spite why should we fight?
We'll war no more—we're wiser grown.
Quibblers and stirrers up of hate,
Let us alone—let us alone.

White man or black, to us alike;
Foemen of no men we will live,
We will not lift our hands to strike,
Or evil for advantage give.
Our hands are free to earn their fee,
Our tongues to let the truth be known;
So despots, knaves, and foes of right,
Let us alone—let us alone.

Great are our destinies: our task,
  Long since begun, shall never end
While suffering has a boon to ask,
  Or truth needs spokesmen to defend;
While vice or crime pollute the time,
  While nations bleed, or patriots groan.
Rulers be wise! and meddling fools,
  Let us alone—let us alone.

ETERNAL JUSTICE.

THE man is thought a knave, or fool,
Or bigot, plotting crime,
Who, for the advancement of his kind,
Is wiser than his time.
For him the hemlock shall distil;
For him the axe be bared;
For him the gibbet shall be built;
For him the stake prepared.
Him shall the scorn and wrath of men
Pursue with deadly aim;
And malice, envy, spite, and lies,
Shall desecrate his name.
But Truth shall conquer at the last,
For round and round we run;
And ever the Right comes uppermost,
And ever is Justice done.

Pace through thy cell, old Socrates,
Cheerily to and fro;

Trust to the impulse of thy soul,
And let the poison flow.
They may shatter to earth the lamp of clay
That holds a light divine,
But they cannot quench the fire of thought
By any such deadly wine.
They cannot blot thy spoken words
From the memory of man
By all the poison ever was brew'd
Since time its course began.
To-day abhorr'd, to-morrow adored,
So round and round we run;
And ever the Truth comes uppermost,
And ever is Justice done.

Plod in thy cave grey anchorite;
Be wiser than thy peers;
Augment the range of human power,
And trust to coming years.
They may call thee wizard, and monk accursed,
And load thee with dispraise;
Thou wert born five hundred years too soon
For the comfort of thy days;
But not too soon for humankind.
Time hath reward in store;
And the demons of our sires become
The saints that we adore.
The blind can see, the slave is lord,
So round and round we run;
And ever the wrong is proved to be wrong,
And ever is Justice done.

Keep, Galileo, to thy thought,
And nerve thy soul to bear;
They may gloat o'er the senseless words they wring
From the pangs of thy despair;
They may veil their eyes, but they cannot hide
The sun's meridian glow;
The heel of a priest may tread thee down,
And a tyrant work thee woe;
But never a truth has been destroy'd;
They may curse it and call it crime;
Pervert and betray, or slander and slay,
Its teachers for a time;
But the sunshine aye shall light the sky,
As round and round we run;
And the Truth shall ever come uppermost,
And Justice shall be done.

And live there now such men as these—
With thoughts like the great of old?
Many have died in their misery,
And left their thought untold;
And many live, and are rank'd as mad,
And placed in the cold world's ban,
For sending their bright far-seeing souls
Three centuries in the van.
They toil in penury and grief,
Unknown, if not malign'd;
Forlorn, forlorn, hearing the scorn
Of the meanest of mankind!

But yet the world goes round and round,
And the genial seasons run;
And ever the Truth comes uppermost,
And ever is Justice done.

THE END.

PRINTED BY COX AND WYMAN, GREAT QUEEN STREET, LONDON.